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BOOKS ISSUE

Mark Steyn on Multiculturalism

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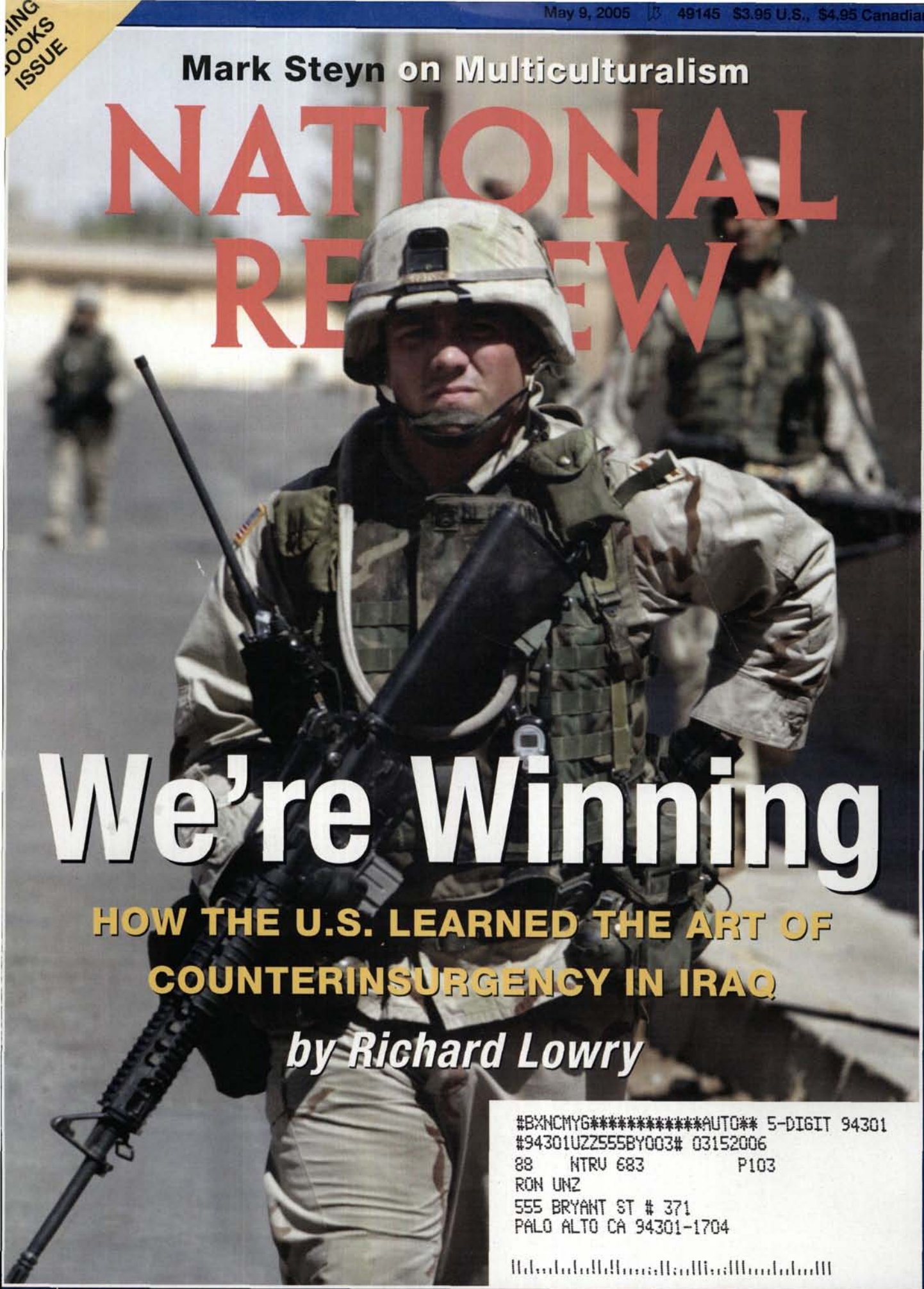

We're Winning

HOW THE U.S. LEARNED THE ART OF COUNTERINSURGENCY IN IRAQ

by Richard Lowry

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MAY 9, 2005 VOL. LVII, NO. 8

NATIONAL REVIEW

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■ COVER STORY

What Went Right

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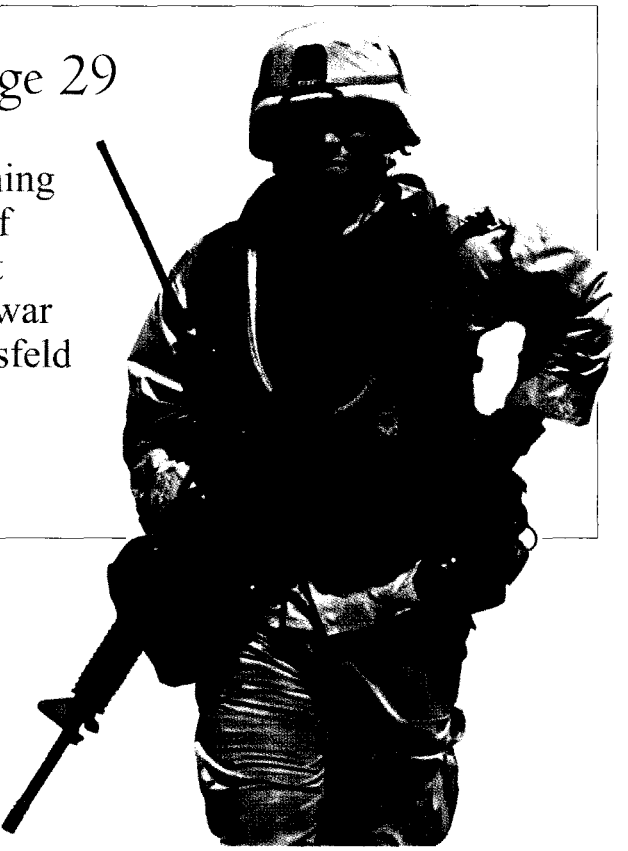
It is time to say it unequivocally: We are winning in Iraq. Even as there has been a steady diet of bad news about Iraq in the media over the last year, even as some hawks have bailed on the war in despair, even as Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has become everyone's whipping boy, the U.S. military has been regaining the strategic upper hand. *By Richard Lowry*



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letters to the editor

THE MARRIAGE WAR

On the basis of two trivial non-events (liberal denunciations of heterosexism—nothing new there) and some parliamentary activity in Canada, David Frum declares that gay marriage must

Jada Pinkett Smith, blasted for 'heteronormativity'

extinguish all notions of gender in family law ("A New Word, A New Day," March 28). "[T]he law must abolish the concept of 'husbands,' 'wives,' 'mothers,' and 'fathers,'" he writes. This is a baffling non sequitur. Same-sex marriages will contain two husbands or two wives, and children jointly adopted by same-sex couples will have two legal mothers or two legal fathers, just as they do today.

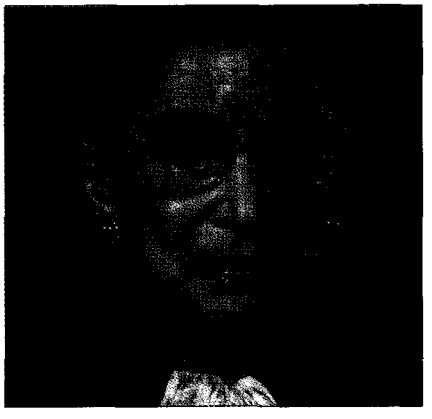
It's true that same-sex marriage would make it harder for the law to prefer opposite-sex over same-sex couples. That, of course, is the point. What Frum fails to consider is that, absent same-sex marriage, it will become difficult if not impossible to prefer *married* over *unmarried* couples. After all, discriminating in favor of marriage can't be fair if millions of Americans can't marry. The law will get busy erasing marriage's special status by creating alternatives and treating cohabiting couples as married. The very term "married" will become impolite: Textbooks will talk about "unions," and anniversaries will become celebrations of "partnerships." In a generation, marriage may seem as passé as men-only clubs do today.

Same-sex marriage has the potential to reaffirm society's belief that marriage, and not cohabitation or "partnership" or anything else, is the family structure of choice—no exclusions, no exceptions. Conservatives ought to like that.

Jonathan Rauch
Washington, D.C.

WHOSE JUSTICE?

In The Week (April 25), you report that Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg gave an astonishing speech defending the Supreme Court's use of foreign law in interpreting the U.S. Constitution. I wonder, would she cite and respect Koranic law when deciding guilt and punishment in a case involving an unquestionably promiscuous Palestinian-American woman who was accused of adultery by her Iranian-American husband, legally married to her in the USA but demanding Iranian-



RBG

style justice? Or would she choose Arab-style justice instead?

M. Robert Paglee
Moorestown, N.J.

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RUTH BADER GINSBERG: GAMMA PRESSE

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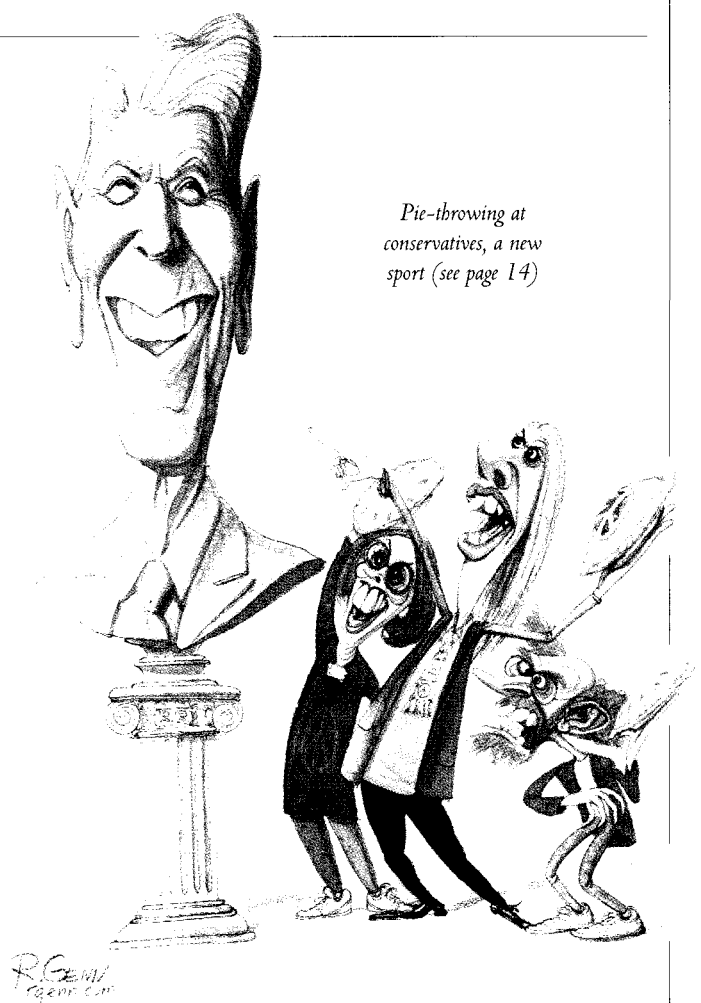
THE WEEK

■ We hear Catholic liberals are going to demand a recount.

■ You might be forgiven for assuming that Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, upon becoming pope, took the name of "Hard-line" rather than "Benedict XVI." It is probably best to ignore the media orthodoxy forming around him rather than to refute it. Ratzinger is, like John Paul II, an intellectual, and like John Paul he was involved in the reforms of Vatican II. He is reputed to be more interested in the administrative tasks of the papacy than his predecessor. But he is no grasper of power: He asked John Paul repeatedly to be allowed to leave the Vatican to resume the life of a scholar. Benedict is now to shepherd a Church that faces unprecedented challenges—such as the vast sway that relativism has over the human mind in the continent of his birth, a sway that he has said threatens to become a "dictatorship." It will be harder to overcome that metaphorical dictatorship than it was to overcome the visible dictatorship that his predecessor had a hand in dismantling. But faith may yet move mountains.

■ John Bolton, the Bush administration's nominee to be ambassador to the U.N., is some Tartar. Carl Ford, a former colleague of Bolton, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he once saw Bolton waving his finger and turn red in the face as he criticized another colleague. In 25 years, Ford claimed, he had never seen such abusive behavior toward a subordinate. No doubt Ford would have fainted when Adlai Stevenson told a Soviet diplomat he would "wait until heck freezes over" for an answer (Stevenson, if you can believe it, used a much stronger word). If the argument is that Bolton does not play well with other Americans, it is preposterous. He has served three presidents in four Senate-confirmed positions. If the argument is, as Senator Boxer put it, that Bolton has "nothing but disdain for the United Nations," isn't a little disdain what the U.N. needs right now? Its peacekeeping troops have been raping unfortunates on two continents, and the secretary general's son helped turn the Oil for Food program into a slush fund. The U.N. needs a tough-minded American who knows his way around, but who is also not afraid of speaking truth to impotence. And with Bolton's nomination now stalled, what the Senate needs is some tough-minded Republicans who know their way around Democratic obstruction.

■ The campaign to take out Tom DeLay as House majority leader continues, but the pickings are pretty slim. Since we last discussed the charges against him, there have been two developments. First, the *New York Times* reported that DeLay's political machine paid his wife and daughter. This would be a big scandal, except a) this was old news, b) many congressmen of both parties employ family members in their political operations, c) there is nothing illegal about employing family members, and d) there is nothing per se unethical about it either.



Pie-throwing at conservatives, a new sport *(see page 14)*

ROMAN GENN

Second, a handful of Republicans made critical comments about DeLay. Rick Santorum said DeLay should answer the charges against him; DeLay said he agreed. Newt Gingrich said much the same thing, although with the extra hostility that a student of the two men's relationship over the last decade would have predicted. Chris Shays said that DeLay should go, which means that he has lost the support of Shays's caucus of one. Finally, conservative congressman Tom Tancredo said that while he thought the charges against DeLay without merit, it might be best for him to step aside. That's it. Barring new revelations, the campaign against DeLay is going to fizzle out.

■ Republican political consultant Arthur Finkelstein hopes to raise $10 million for a STOP HER NOW effort directed against Hillary Clinton's reelection to the Senate in 2006. Conservatives had better get used to two propositions. First, they are one of her best weapons. Their opposition solidifies her base, and makes it easy for her to blunt their attacks by feinting right. (How can a demoness feint to the right? Ergo, she must not be a demoness.) Second, in the event that Mrs. Clinton surmounts

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Environmental False Alarms

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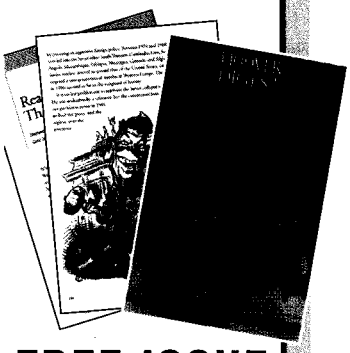

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In his new book, *Collapse,* Jared Diamond begins with a chapter on my home state of Montana. Although painting a romantic picture of "Big Sky Country," he decries environmental tragedies including toxic mining waste, forest fires, soil exhaustion, water shortages, and invasive species.

Diamond blames these environmental perils on miners, loggers, and farmers who "behaved as they did because the government required almost nothing of them" and because they were businesspeople maximizing profits.

Reading his gloom and doom chapter, one wonders why Ted Turner, Charles Schwab, and friends are buying land in Montana. The reason is that Montana's environment is not as trashed as alarmist Diamond would have us believe.

Here are the facts about Montana. You can drink from almost any stream without concern for toxic wastes, though you might worry about giardia from burgeoning elk herds. You can view millions of acres of spectacular forests—many on private lands. Farms remain productive, and lands mined at the turn of the century are being reclaimed. In short, **Montana's environment is getting better, not worse.**

The same holds generally in the developed world. From 1970 to 2000, for example, concentrations of carbon monoxide fell by 75 percent in the United States and by 95 percent in the United Kingdom. From 1975 to 2000, nitrogen oxides declined by 35 percent in the United States and by 40 percent in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, we in the United States are actually sequestering as much carbon through improved agricultural techniques, healthy forests, and sealed landfills as we are adding to the atmosphere's greenhouse gases.

Why is this so? First, as incomes rise, people demand and can afford a healthier environment. Study after study confirms that "wealthier is healthier."

Second, societies with a strong rule of law, private property rights, and market systems have better environments than those that do not. As more countries have adopted these institutions following the fall of the Iron Curtain, incomes and environmental quality have improved.

Diamond has it backward when he blames environmental problems on a lack of government regulation and too much private enterprise. On Montana's frontier, cattlemen formed voluntary associations to prevent overgrazing of the range. Farmers developed water rights to efficiently allocate water. In addition, mining companies compensated landowners if the companies' pollution spilled across their boundaries.

New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof likens environmentalist false alarms to car alarms that become "just an irritating background noise." It is time to turn off the alarms and recognize that our economic and environmental futures will be brighter if we rely more on private property and markets than on governmental regulations.

—Terry L. Anderson

Terry L. Anderson is the John and Jean DeNault Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and the executive director of PERC—the Property and Environment Research Center located in Bozeman, Montana.

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THE WEEK...

Finkelstein's challenge, she may be, in our terms, the best Democratic presidential candidate on offer three years from now. Perhaps not all of her feints are feints. She may indeed have a commitment to a stronger response to Islamist terror than John Kerry or Howard Dean had. Let us hope that conservatives do not have to get used to a third proposition: that Mrs. Clinton will be the second Clinton to succeed a Bush.

■ Federal spending on Medicaid is projected to increase by 36 percent (or $70 billion) between 2006 and 2010. House Republicans voted for a budget that contemplates reducing that growth to 34 percent. But that's too severe a cut for some Republicans. Earlier this spring, the Senate voted 51–49 against cuts. Now Heather Wilson of New Mexico has gotten 43 of her fellow House Republicans to sign a letter in opposition to cuts. That's not the only bad news for fiscal conservatives. The White House, which had proposed cutting payments to wealthy farmers and took heat from some congressmen as a result, is now signaling its flexibility on the point. Now is the time for congressional Republican leaders—and congressional Republican backbenchers who like to campaign as fiscal conservatives at election time—to show some spine.

■ Several provisions of the Patriot Act, the anti-terrorism law Congress passed after September 11, expire this year. The bill's critics on the left and the right want to use the moment to win some modifications to the law. But their suggested changes would be either harmful or unnecessary. They object to a section of the law that allows federal judges to order that records be provided to law enforcement when those records are sought for the purpose of fighting international terrorism. While the act does not specifically mention library records, it does not exempt them, either, so critics have latched on to the idea that the FBI is going to be poring over John Q. Public's reading list. But grand juries could subpoena library records long before Patriot, and without the judicial and congressional oversight that Patriot provides. The law also specifically requires that no investigation can proceed "solely upon the basis of activities protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution." The critics object that the act forbids recipients of an order to disclose that they got it. But secrecy here is unavoidable: Terrorism investigators cannot do their jobs while constantly tipping off the suspects. The *New York Times* warns that the government will "seize an entire database—all the medical records of a hospital, all of the files of an immigration group—when it is investigating a single person." But orders for records can be reviewed, and the standard for review includes that the order be reasonable in scope. The other major target of the Patriot critics is its provision for "sneak and peek" searches, which are searches where a judge has okayed a law-enforcement request that the target not be immediately notified of the search. Patriot lets judges give that okay under certain circumstances, but the critics want to limit those circumstances. Under their proposal, investigators could not conduct delayed-notification searches even when they thought, and judges agreed, that immediate notification would "seriously jeopardize" the investigation. This is unreasonable. The ACLU says that the Bush administration, in supporting these "freedom-stealing provisions," is "telling those of us who believe in privacy, due process, and the right to dissent that it's time to surrender our freedom." Similar rhetoric can be found from conservative critics of Patriot—to their shame. The anti-Patriot coalition often congratulates itself on its broadness, but it appears to stretch only from left-wing hysterics to right-wing hysterics.

■ Connecticut lawmakers are in the process of establishing civil unions for homosexuals. It's a bad idea. While there may be good reasons to tinker with laws so as to help unmarried people who are living together—be they gay lovers or roommates who are not having sex with each other—we see no very good reason for the government to recognize same-sex sexual relationships as such. That said, we are glad that the law is being enacted democratically, and not by judges rewriting a law in the guise of interpreting it. Vermont's civil unions, and Massachusetts's same-sex "marriages," came from the courts. We support a constitutional amendment to undo the Vermont and Massachusetts rulings—and to keep litigators from expanding the Connecticut law beyond its intent. But it would probably be impossible and undesirable to try to amend the Constitution to prevent the legislators of Connecticut from doing what they are unwisely doing.

■ The estate tax complicates the tax code, impedes capital formation, and misallocates resources. It is an inefficient tax, costing the economy an extra dollar for every dollar it raises for the federal government. Bush's tax cuts included a repeal of the estate tax—but only for the year 2010, after which it would go right back up. Now the House has voted for permanent abolition, with 42 Democrats joining all but one Republican. Senate supporters of permanent abolition number nearly a filibuster-proof 60. Sen. Jon Kyl, who has been seeking abolition for years, is exploring whether a compromise can ensure that there are definitely 60 votes. Lobbyists for small-business owners and farmers are split, with some wanting a compromise that minimizes the tax rate and some wanting a compromise that maximizes the estate value where the tax would kick in. We're with the first camp. Raising the exemption will divide the anti-tax constituency on class lines. The rate is more likely to stay low the more people are paying it. But our real preference is for holding off on compromise until after there's a vote on permanent abolition. Let red-state Democrats sweat a while.

■ If Social Security is the third rail of American politics, then the first two rails probably belong to Amtrak. Despite proving itself woefully unable to turn a profit, Amtrak remains enormously popular among the political class and continues to receive massive amounts of federal aid: $1.2 billion in 2005 alone. On April 15, however, its trains not only failed to run on time—they failed to run at all. Or at least none of the premium Acela trains serving the Northeast corridor ran, after inspectors found them replete with cracked brakes. The problem may take months to fix. This snafu happens to come at an opportune moment. Earlier this year, the Bush administration proposed cutting off Amtrak's annual subsidy, letting the rail line fall into

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THE WEEK...

bankruptcy, and allowing the market to sort things out—a sound plan that will maintain the services that travelers actually want and get Amtrak off the dole for good. Now all Congress must do is break one of Washington's iron rules, as defined by Ronald Reagan: "If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."

■ Arlen Specter is trying to patch together a coalition to pass a bill settling asbestos litigation. A settlement is a good idea, but the bill is badly flawed. Specter wants to create a trust fund, administered by the federal government and funded by corporate defendants, to pay benefits to claimants. But the bill does not have strict criteria to make sure that only people who actually got sick from asbestos get the loot—and this field is rife with fraud. If the money runs out, taxpayers may end up being on the hook. Sens. Jon Kyl, Tom Coburn, and John Cornyn are objecting. They should persevere. Any trust fund should include real medical criteria for claimants. Better yet, Congress could establish real medical criteria for the litigation and not set up a government-administered trust fund at all.

■ Appeals-court judge Guido Calabresi told a lawyers' meeting last summer that *Bush* v. *Gore*, the Supreme Court decision that put Bush in the White House, was an "illegitimate act" by a "legitimate institution." Hitler and Mussolini rose to power, Calabresi went on, in the same way, Hitler appointed chancellor by President Hindenburg, Mussolini appointed premier by the king of Italy. Calabresi added that Bush was not Hitler, but he then compared him to Mussolini, saying that, like Il Duce, Bush "has exercised extraordinary power. . . . It is important," Calabresi concluded, "to put [such a] person out" (the 2004 election was four months away). The Judicial Council of Calabresi's circuit has now ruled that his election advice was a "clear and serious" violation of judicial ethics. Judicial sloganeering may not be an impeachable offense. But it is a horse's ass offense. Calabresi just got crossed off the Supreme Court list of any future Democratic president.

■ The British elections on May 5 will probably return Labour and Tony Blair to power. The Tories under Michael Howard recruited Lynton Crosby, the savvy Australian campaign manager who masterminded John Howard's reelection, to sharpen their message on crime and immigration. But their economic policies are more of the same, only a bit less. The electorate, while unenthusiastic about Blair, is not so hostile to him to change horses. Which is unfortunate, all things considered. Tony Blair has rightly earned the admiration of American conservatives by his steadfastness in the war. But his Europeanism will, if consummated, deprive future prime ministers of the freedom to adopt such policies in the face of continental resistance. A victorious Blair may not be prime minister for long in any case, giving way to his left-wing finance minister, Gordon Brown. Blairism will have a sad and muddy endgame, scraping away all the fine gilt that Blair had applied to the special relationship.

■ Recent polls show French voters poised to reject the proposed EU constitution when it is put to a referendum on May 29. One can sympathize with those who fear EU tentacles that prod ever deeper into member-state sovereignty, even if many of the constitution's critics come from the left and decry it as too market-friendly. Jacques Chirac, for his part, argued on French television that rejecting the constitution would make Europe too weak to resist the world's "ultra-liberal" (i.e., capitalist), "Anglo-Saxon," and "Atlanticist" influences. Whom could he possibly have in mind? Here's one clue: The official "yes" campaign literature says that ratifying the constitution is Europe's only hope of standing up to the American superpower. Chirac recognizes that the underlying logic of European integration is anti-American, even if the Bush administration does not.

■ The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has, one hopes, just hastened its own demise. Shortly after Kofi Annan proposed to dissolve the body (once infamously chaired by Moammar Qaddafi's Libya, that human-rights stalwart), the 53-member commission, as usual, used its annual session as an opportunity to condemn Israel—at least three times more than any other country. Cuba also received a slap on the wrist, to the world's surprise. But nowhere to be found on the list of offenders was Sudan, China, or Iran. The commission highlights one of the U.N.'s greatest structural problems: Tyrannical regimes cannot be expected to condemn other tyrannical regimes for doing the sorts of things tyrannical regimes regularly do. Annan has little reputation left to salvage, but he now has a chance to make some good of his own failures by following through on the sound idea of creating a new human-rights council, one composed exclusively of member states that themselves abide by the principles they are trusted to enforce.

■ Friendship between President Bush and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel goes back to long before either man held his present office. At their meeting in Crawford, there were "peals of laughter" in private, and mutual compliments in public. Both men want to see the evacuation of all the Israeli settlements in Gaza, and a few on the West Bank for good measure. But the mutual back-slapping stops there, and agreement to disagree begins. A considerable and vociferous number of Israelis oppose the evacuation in principle, and Sharon himself raises the temperature with mutterings about civil war. Covering himself, he

THE U.N. STORY

Conceived with hope while FDR
Still lingered, and a rising star
Through South Korea's agony;
A slip led to a slide till we—
The One World types excepted—peered
At Kofi as one would the weird.
When Bolton verbalized this thought,
Libs glared and got, like, overwrought.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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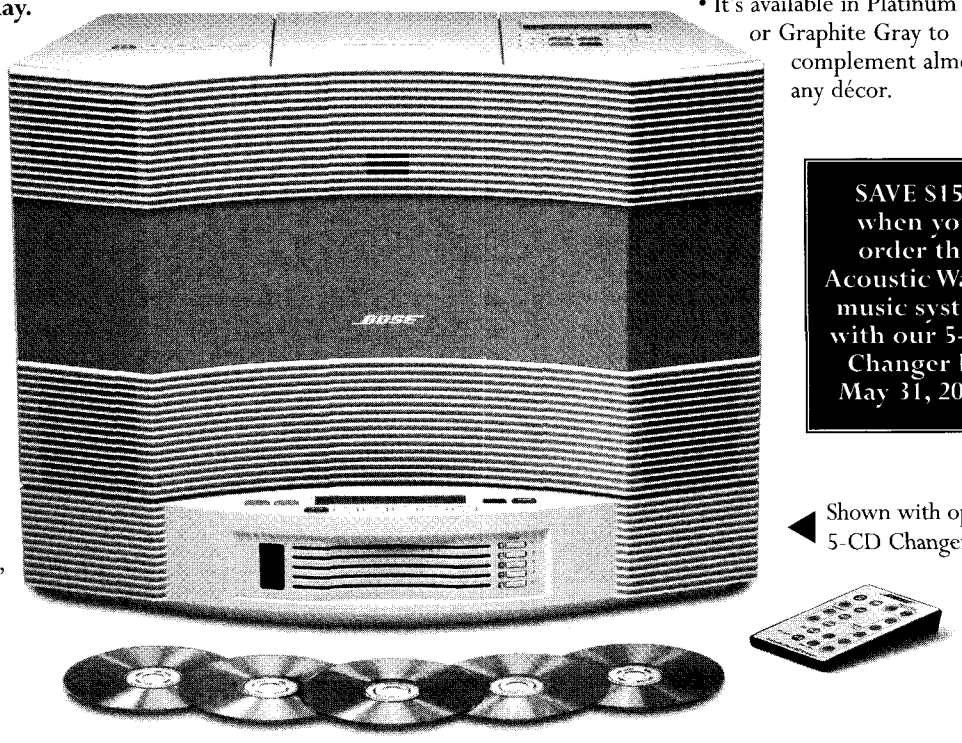

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THE WEEK...

simultaneously authorizes expansion of West Bank settlements that evidently will never be abandoned. The famous road map calls for the cessation of all settlement building, and the two leaders leave up in the air what this road map means. Sharon also announces that he may postpone pulling out of Gaza, if only for a few short weeks. Meanwhile the Palestinian Authority is slipping fast into anarchy, the terrorists are using the present lull to rearm and regroup in the West Bank, and nobody is arresting them. The Israeli military expects the situation to heat up once more in the not-so-distant future. Under those peals of laughter at Crawford, the two leaders are engaged in a high-wire act, with no safety net.

■ In Iraq, they've found new mass graves, holding about 5,000 of those happy, kite-flying subjects Michael Moore depicted in his movie. About 300 grave sites in all have been found, containing some 300,000 Iraqis. In related news, Michael Kinsley, the editorial-page editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, wrote the other day, "Every time George W. Bush hears 'Hail to the Chief,' the odds go up that some unsuspecting country is going to find itself getting democratized—with all the violence, anarchy, foreign occupation, arbitrary arrests, torture of prisoners, suppression of dissent, and random deaths that word has come to imply." When you hear talk like that about U.S. foreign policy, remember those 300 mass graves.

■ Mexican foreign secretary Luis Ernesto Derbez showed up the other day to give an address to students at the University of Texas Pan-American. On the vexed topic of illegal immigration from his country into ours, Derbez (who, to the best of our knowledge, crossed the border legally on this occasion) delivered himself of the opinion that "the complete integration" of the populations of Mexico and the United States is inevitable. Added Derbez: "One thing I can tell you is that the U.S. of the 21st century is not the U.S. of the 19th century." Hmm. Perhaps we Americans ought to have a national conversation among ourselves.

CHRIS KLEPONIS/ZUMA

His Hispanicness

LAST November, George Stephanopoulos suggested that Bush's then-rumored attorney-general pick, Alberto Gonzales, would bring about a "change in tone" because a Hispanic son of immigrants would have to be more conciliatory than mean old John Ashcroft.

Looks like Steph was right. According to the ACLU's talking points, Alberto Gonzales is "a welcome and constructive change." At the recent hearings on the reauthorization of the Patriot Act, Sen. Richard Durbin (D., Ill.) exclaimed, "I am heartened by your opening statement, Attorney General, about being open to suggestions and ideas. It is a grand departure from your predecessor, and I think it is the right spirit . . ." Sen. Russell Feingold (D., Wis.), who not long ago claimed the Patriot Act had made Americans "afraid to read books, terrified into silence," agreed. "This is a departure from what we've heard before. It's a good start," he said, adding, "I hope we can have a productive dialogue that has been missing for so long."

Now much of this can be chalked up to Gonzales's more conciliatory style of getting things done. If making nice with the ACLU and entering constructive dialogue with Russ Feingold gets the Patriot Act renewed, fine. But it's hard to shake the feeling that the attorney general is "growing" just a bit too much. Full disclosure: My wife works for Gonzales as a speechwriter, as she did for John Ashcroft. Which is why, on some cool, still mornings, if you listen very carefully you can hear the rustling of the pages of the *Washington Post* and then hear me yell, "What the hell is your boss doing?!"

Part of the problem is that while Gonzales was perfectly qualified for the job of attorney general in his own right—former White House counsel, judge, etc.—the administration nonetheless offered him up in the spirit of affirmative action. Worse, Gonzales feels that spirit in him, and sometimes sounds like his humble background is his real qualification, and all that other stuff on his resume is filler. Shortly after he got the job he told the *Houston Chronicle* that his family history—his parents were poor Mexican immigrants—would inform how he handles immigration issues. He quickly added that he must make enforcing the law his highest priority, but imagine if John Ashcroft had said *his* family history—his father and grandfather were Baptist ministers—was going to influence his policies. Since he's been attorney general, Gonzales seems almost as interested in speaking to Hispanic groups as he is in speaking to law-enforcement organizations. And here I thought this kind of identity-politics outreach was the reason we had a HUD secretary.

Meanwhile there are other troubling signs. For example, Gonzales signed off on a plea deal for Sandy "Sticky Pants" Berger under which Berger must endure having his security clearance rescinded for three more years, making him unemployable by George W. Bush's White House. A grave burden, indeed. He also must pay $10,000. Sandy Burglar might as well fling his wristwatch at the bailiff and call it a day.

There's time yet, but if I had to nominate a cabinet official for the title of Most Likely to Disappoint, Gonzales would certainly be in the early running.

—JONAH GOLDBERG

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THE BEST ON

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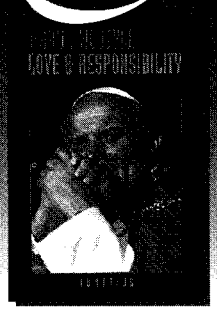

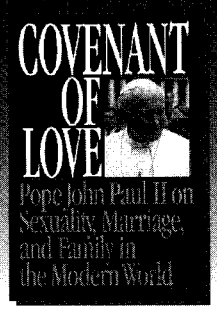

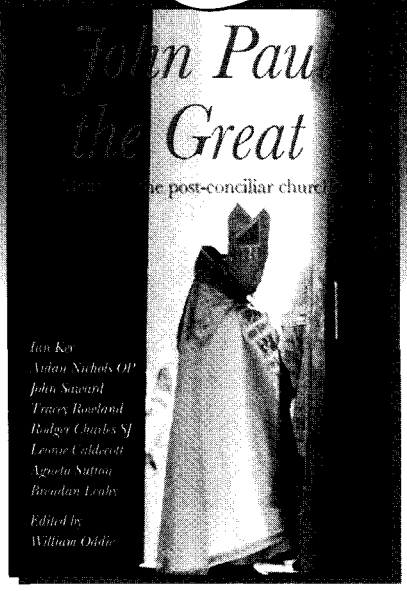

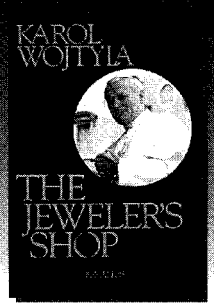

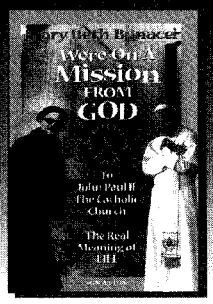

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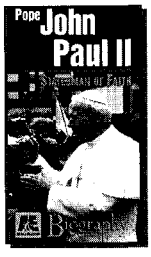

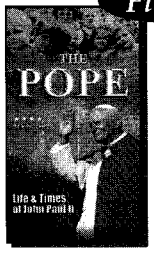

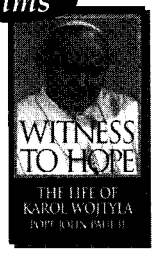

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THE WEEK...

selves about what we *want* the U.S. of the 21st century to be, instead of having the matter dictated to us by foreign politicians. Or would that be "nativist" and "exclusionary"? Asked about the Minutemen—citizen volunteers helping to patrol the Arizona border—Derbez said he thought they should be prosecuted. For what, exactly? Perhaps we should reserve our prosecutorial resources for people who are actually breaking some law. Illegal immigrants, for example.

■ A couple of weeks ago, Flight KLM 685 took off from Amsterdam, headed for Mexico City with 278 passengers on board. It was a direct flight, Holland to Mexico, but because it was scheduled to cross U.S. airspace, the Mexican authorities forwarded the flight manifest to our Department of Homeland Security. It turned out that two of the passengers, both from Saudi Arabia, raised a number of red flags on Homeland Security databases. Both of them had attended the same Arizona flight school as 9/11 hijacker Hani Hanjour. Taking a break from bureaucratic infighting to safeguard the U.S. public for once, Homeland Security denied the plane overfly rights. The Canadians, told of the situation, denied landing rights, so KLM 685 had to turn in mid-Atlantic and head back to Amsterdam. Now, why would two (possible) Qaedists want to go to Mexico City? Claimed the suspects: To visit their sick father, an ex-Saudi diplomat, who lives there. This claim is fishy. And we do not know whether, supposing the two men had reached Mexico, they might shortly thereafter have shown up in the U.S. Given the state of our southern border, there would have been very little to stop them.

■ Chinese resentment of Japan has been one of the invariants of the modern world, going all the way back to the May Fourth movement of 1919, when mass protests erupted in China over the transfer of German concessions in that country to Japan after World War I. The egregiously bad behavior of the Japanese in their various aggressions against China from 1931 to 1945 further stoked the fires. Still, that was all a lifetime ago, and the ferocity of the anti-Japanese demonstrations all over China these past few days needs some explaining. The major cause, the Chinese tell us, is a decision by Japan's education ministry to approve a school textbook that downplays the 1931–45 horrors. We have a modest proposal to offer. Let Japanese schoolchildren be taught of the cruelties their ancestors inflicted on the Chinese; and let Chinese schoolchildren be taught about the numerous campaigns of mass murder, forced labor, and cultural destruction carried out by the Chinese Communist party against Tibetans, Turkestanis, Mongolians, landowners, intellectuals, religious believers, "counter-revolutionary elements," and so on. A close examination of China's high-school textbooks would, we feel sure, demonstrate that in the matter of suppressing unpleasant facts about history, China's ruling Communist party has nothing to learn from anyone.

■ For the first time since Iran's Islamic revolution, the U.S. government is preparing to give funds to Iranians and U.S. organizations working in Iran to promote human rights and democracy. Congress has appropriated $3 million for the effort and the State Department is soliciting proposals from non-governmental groups. This move—a shift in policy for the U.S., which spends millions on radio and TV broadcasts in Farsi but has until now refused to give money to anyone inside the Islamic Republic—should serve as encouragement to Iran's brave dissidents. Though many Iranians fear that accepting American money would undermine their independence and legitimacy, if spent quietly and wisely American funds could reach opposition leaders indirectly, and without compromising their cause. Of chief importance right now for Iran's pro-democracy movement is to bring together disparate groups and educate the Iranian public. If American money is able to facilitate those efforts, and to do so inconspicuously, it will be money well spent.

■ In an article starting on page 25, Dan Oliver dispels some confusions surrounding the abortion issue. As he points out, nobody disputes that the human fetus is a living organism of the human species. The question, rather, is whether that organism counts as a "person" who deserves legal protection against being killed. This magazine's view is that it does deserve that protection. Denying it that protection would require us to invent a category of human "unpersons." And it would be difficult to identify the principles that would confine that category to unborn children. Oliver's argument—which was also Ronald Reagan's—is that abortion should be restricted even if there were doubt about the personhood of the fetus. In that case, the balance of risks would still tell against abortion. As Reagan put it: If you thought that a bag on the street might contain a baby, you wouldn't kick it down the gutter. So even if you do not accept our argument for protecting the unborn, you should have a presumption in favor of that argument—as Oliver elegantly says.

■ Laurence Tribe, the liberal Harvard law professor, has been reprimanded by Harvard for a "significant lapse in proper academic practice." The reprimand comes six months after *The Weekly Standard* reported great similarities between Tribe's 1985 *God Save This Honorable Court* and Henry J. Abraham's 1974 *Justices and Presidents*. Eerily similar phrasing—right down to quotation mistakes and a 19-word sentence lifted directly from Abraham—peppered the entirety of Tribe's book, which had no footnotes and only a brief mention of *Justices and Presidents* at the end. Nevertheless, Harvard president Larry Summers and law-school dean Elena Kagan attributed the congruence to "inadvertence rather than intentionality," and said it was more closely related to "matters of phrasing than to fundamental ideas." Tribe apologized for what he joins Harvard in characterizing as his sins of omission. As far as Harvard is concerned, there will be no further sanctions, though, according to the university's handbook, a student caught for similar transgressions would "ordinarily [be] required to withdraw from the College."

■ Eric Robert Rudolph pleaded guilty to four bombings (two abortion clinics, a gay club, and the Atlanta Olympics). He had spent five years as a fugitive in the North Carolina woods, and was sentenced to four consecutive life terms. In a rambling statement, he described himself as "bloodied, but emphatically

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84	9.2%
86	9.9%
89	11.0%
90+	11.3%

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75/80	6.6%
77/83	6.9%
80/85	7.3%
83/87	7.8%
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unbowed." Doubly wrong, Rudolph. You aren't bloodied, the 150 people you wounded and the two you killed were. Nor are you unbowed, an expression that implies the ability to bow: You are rigid with the pride that set you up as judge, jury, and avenging angel. The John Brown nut wing of wacko politics loses another active soldier, thank God.

■ "Unlike some, I'll pay him what I owe him," wrote George Orwell in a 1943 poem giving a leftist's tribute to Winston Churchill. In an essay, "The Politics of Churlishness," Martin Peretz, editor-in-chief of *The New Republic*, offers a similar thank-you to George W. Bush. Peretz itemizes the churls: "critics of the war who want nothing of history except to be proved right"; Monday-morning quarterbacks—"what blogger couldn't have accomplished [the occupation of Iraq] more deftly?" (That means you, Andrew Sullivan.) Then he ticks off the hopeful upheaval in the Middle East: Iraq free of Saddam and turning the corner; the Cedar Revolution; Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia nervously considering their next moves. (And that is not to mention the astounding events in Afghanistan.) "It is simply stupid, empirically and philosophically, to deny that all or any of this would have happened without the deeply unpopular but historically grand initiative of Bush" post-9/11. "One does not have to admire a lot about George W. Bush to admire what he has so far wrought. One need only be a thoughtful American with an interest in proliferating liberalism around the world. And, if liberals are unwilling to proliferate liberalism, then conservatives will."

■ Red-diaper baby, ex-radical, and now outspoken conservative commentator David Horowitz got a pie in the face when addressing students at Indianapolis's Butler University the other day. A week earlier, Bill Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard*, got the same treatment at Earlham College in Richmond, Ind.; and Pat Buchanan was recently doused with salad dressing while speaking at Western Michigan University. (Adding insult to injury, pictures appear to show that the projected dressing was *French*.) Is this just a midwestern phenomenon, or should conservative speakers nationwide start showing up in dungarees for college events? We can put up with the indignity, and the preference of campus leftists for prankish assaults over reasoned rebuttal speaks for itself; but we can't see any point in incurring unnecessary dry-cleaning bills.

■ Andrea Dworkin, radical feminist and anti-pornography zealot, died age 58. A child of the Sixties, she had gone to the end of one kind of line: Bennington literature major, marriage to an abusive Dutch radical. If that was liberation, she was having none of it. But there is freedom, and freedom: on one hand, the pointless scratching of itches; on the other, love and truth, which truly set us free. She railed at vice; may she now rest in peace.

National Review Is Coming to Atlanta!

■ The editors cordially invite you to join Rich Lowry, Ramesh Ponnuru, Kate O'Beirne, Jonah Goldberg, Kathryn Lopez, Jay Nordlinger, John Derbyshire, and Andrew Stuttaford for an evening of stimulating conversation, fine dining, and all-around revelry in Atlanta, Ga., on May 5, 2005, in support of National Review and National Review Online. Tickets for the event—which includes a special two-hour seminar and a private cocktail party and dinner, all with the editors—are $500. Space is limited. For reservations please call Tim Wolff at 212-679-7330, or e-mail him at twolff@nationalreview.com.

THE COURTS

Injudicious Comments

In their efforts to confine the power of the federal judiciary to its proper constitutional dimensions, conservatives face two foes more tenacious and powerful than Patrick Leahy or Harry Reid. Those foes are, first, a legal culture that celebrates judicial activism or, worse, assumes its inevitability; and second, a political culture that regards the rule of judges as the rule of law.

Confirming judges committed to applying the law rather than making it would begin to rectify the first problem. Solving the second, deeper problem requires that our political class challenge the courts' self-proclaimed monopoly on constitutional interpretation. That monopoly means that judges can effectively define the limits of their own power. As a result, their interpretations come to supplant the Constitution itself. The most promising line of attack on judicial supremacy is for Congress to use its constitutional power to limit the courts' jurisdiction. But judicial supremacy has become so ingrained over the last two generations that any course of action will be dauntingly difficult.

That's why conservatives ought to think carefully about what they're up against when they are tempted to make incautious comments about reining in the judiciary. Too many politicians and organizations on the right are being reckless at the moment. After federal judges refused to order Terri Schiavo's feeding tube reinserted, House Republican leader Tom DeLay said, "The time will come for the men responsible for this to answer for their behavior." Asked whether the judges should be impeached, he said, "There's plenty of time to look into that." Then John Cornyn speculated on the Senate floor that recent violence against judges may have been a reaction, though certainly an unjustified one, to judicial activism. The Family Research Council decided to hold an event dedicated to breaking the filibuster against "people of faith and moral conviction."

DeLay and Cornyn have backtracked from their remarks, and other Republicans have distanced themselves from them. Sen. Bill Frist is under pressure not to attend the Family Research Council event. President Bush and Vice President Cheney have felt it necessary to declare their allegiance to "judicial independence."

These incidents have done some damage to the conservative campaign on the courts. It is now that much easier for liberals to get the public to see any attempt to assert a role for the political

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branches in restraining judicial excess—even the Republican demand that Bush's judicial nominees receive an up-or-down vote—as intemperate, dangerous, or incipiently theocratic.

So it is time to assert some distinctions. Senator Cornyn's speculation strikes us, first, as simply untrue: We do not believe that the assorted maniacs and criminals who have assaulted judges (and their families) are motivated in any part by a concern that judges have claimed powers that properly belong to legislatures. If it were true, it would be irrelevant to the questions of what powers judges should exercise and what other governmental actors should do when they exceed those powers: The resolution of these questions should not be swayed by violent intimidation. We're sure Senator Cornyn sincerely regrets his passing remark.

Congressman DeLay's view that impeaching activist judges is desirable, on the other hand, is longstanding. An interesting academic debate could be had about whether there are circumstances in which a judge could rightly be impeached for making lawless rulings. Hamilton thought there were. But impeachment makes no sense as a remedy for the defects of the modern judiciary. If we had only a few bad apples in a generally sound judiciary—and a legal culture that regarded them as such—then it would perhaps be possible and salutary to impeach the miscreants. That is manifestly not the case now. Either DeLay can try impeaching five or six members of the Supreme Court, or he can go after a few judges who have made decisions that particularly offend him. The first course would be mad. The second would change the character of the conservative campaign against judicial overreach from an attempt to rebalance the structure of American government to a vindictive crusade to punish specific people.

The Family Research Council, meanwhile, is guilty of rhetorical abandon. To suggest that the Democrats who are blocking Bush's judicial nominees are motivated by hostility to "people of faith," simpliciter, is wrong and poisonous. Social conservatives do themselves no favors when they presume to speak for all religious people—let alone all people with moral convictions. They do the Constitution no favors, either.

notes & asides

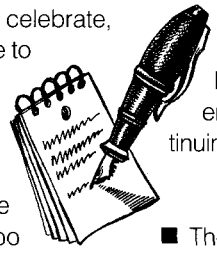
■ **WFB's remarks at a celebration hosted by Fr. George W. Rutler for the 50th anniversary of his parish, the Church of Our Saviour, New York City, February 8, 2005**

Ladies and gentlemen. I was asked ten days ago if I would take part in this program, and I of course said yes, I would, as who would not under the circumstances? I then received, only yesterday, a copy of a column by the illustrious George Weigel, published in the *Denver Catholic Register*. What he said in that column which is immediately relevant was that, at this celebration, scores of VIPs would be present and that "the bestselling point of the affair is that, as Father Rutler has assured me, there will be no speeches."

A part of me joined in gratitude at this assurance, but another part of me wondered what I would do with the 30-minute speech I had so carefully prepared. I prayed to St. Jude, who counsels us on confronting the impossible, and quick as a flash he got back to me, saying, "Bill, why don't you save that speech to give at the 60th anniversary celebration of Our Saviour?"

I thought that a brilliant idea. But it raised, of course, a problem I am not certain St. Jude is equipped to deal with, namely my longevity. All of which brings me to the point I was authorized to articulate in my non-speech. Appropriately integrated into what has come before, it is this: Before the end of the year, I will be 80. But before the end of the winter, Father Rutler will be 60. So that whereas we can't count on my speaking his praises and celebrating his achievements ten years from now, we can express our felicitations on his 60th birthday, which is just around the corner.

How very much he has to celebrate, and how very much we have to thank him for, especially that resplendent church where President Bush paused to pray for the welfare of our country only five months ago. Maybe he too should be invited to speak on the 60th anniversary of the Church of Our Saviour. Meanwhile, we pray that Father Rutler will enjoy his own celebration, and that he will be sustained by the gratitude we all feel for him and his achievements.



■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Even though the word "encephalophonic" is not defined in any dictionary, as you and I can attest (NR, April 11), the explanation you provided of its usage, to describe, according to a book review, your besiegement of the literate world, is an acceptable exegesis, I think, and does make literary sense to me. In defense of the use of new words in general, "encephalophonic" in particular, being an unusual word, describes exactly the circumstances where a person in a given situation does appear to beleaguer the literate world. And therefore, "encephalophonic" is the right word, and I encourage you to continue using it, as it captures the essence, in one sesquipedalian word, of what would take several words to describe.

Yours gratefully,
J. Gilberto Quezada
San Antonio, Tex.

Dear Mr. Quezada: What I need is encephalophonic approval of continuing to use it!

Cordially, WFB

■ There is a fiction in the Bahamas, where I spent a month at work on a manuscript, called the Post Office. While I was in the Bahamas my office forwarded me six packets of mail. Three of them were never delivered, and have not been returned to New York. If it happens that you sent me a letter in March, please do not be surprised that I have not acknowledged it—I have not seen it. If convenient, please send me a copy.

Best,
—WFB

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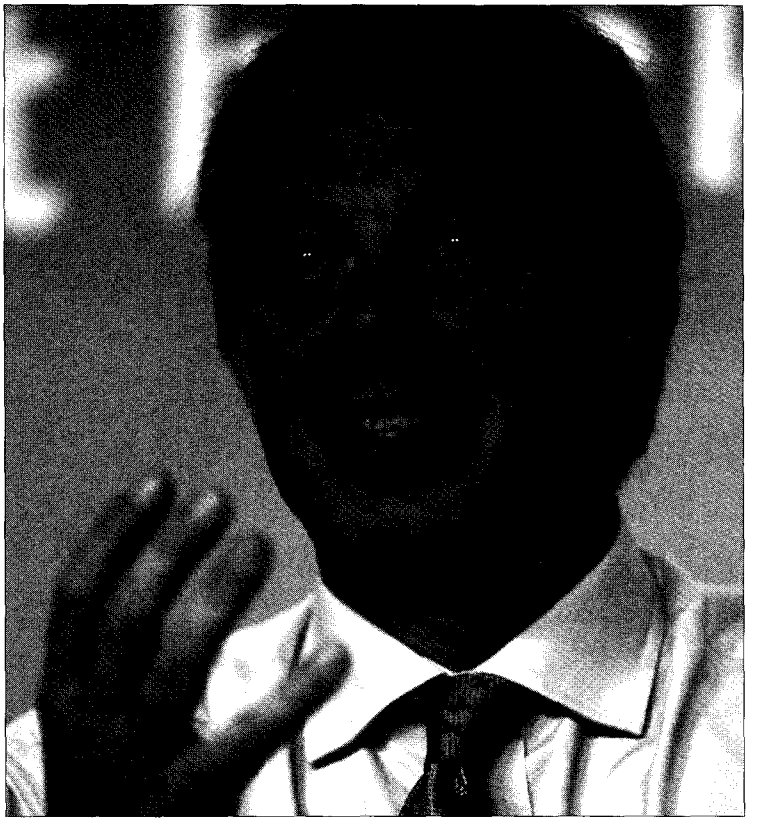

■ BRITAIN ■

Tony and Tories

A little excitement on the way to Blair's third term

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

London

It was very possible, indeed easy, to spend a recent Sunday afternoon walking around west London without ever bumping up against the May 5 election campaign. It was a warm, sunny, and wind-free day. London positively glittered with prosperity. Half of the world seemed to be on vacation here. And I would hazard that more people were interested in the report that, according to 500 international chefs polled by *Restaurant* magazine, London now has more world-class restaurants than Paris and New York combined than in the IMF's criticism of Britain's budgetary "black hole."

Britain has now enjoyed uninterrupted economic growth for 13 years—and economic growth in 21 out of the last 23 years in all. It shows not only in the capitalist sheen of renovated London, with its biscuit-colored buildings that used to be black, but also in public attitudes. Politics is less important in people's lives. They look more to work, enterprise, education, and their own efforts for prosperity.

Insofar as they consider politics, they credit Labour with the good performance of the economy. That is not exactly false, but it is vastly oversimplified. The last recession ended in 1992, when the Tories had five years more to go in office. Britain's long-run economic recovery is the result of the Thatcherite reforms of the 1980s, the fiscal stabilization introduced by Tory chancellor Norman Lamont in 1992, and Labour chancellor Gordon Brown's granting of independence to the Bank of England in 1997. In that order of importance. Whatever the economics, however, the politics favor Labour, which now enjoys a 20-point lead over Michael Howard's Tories on the question of economic competence. That is a disastrous reversal for the Tories, who had hitherto been regarded as the "sound economy" party.

Attitudes toward the public sector are more complicated. Most Brits are unhappy with its falling standards: the long waiting lists and dirty hospitals in the National Health Service; the time spent by the police on form-filling rather than catching criminals; the fact that the schools graduate too many illiterates; and so on. Until recently they accepted the New Labour argument that these failures stem from past Tory underfunding. Gordon Brown followed through by pouring money into public services in the last two years.

But as public-sector performance continues to lag, doubts have set in and interest in quasi-market reform has grown. In their manifestos, both major parties respond with a very similar mix of more spending and greater "choice." Both, however, face public skepticism. The Tories are still not trusted to devote enough spending to the public sector. Blair's reform agenda, modest though it is, is generally expected to fall victim to Brown's centralizing, egalitarian, and redistributionist instincts (as, indeed, it largely did in the last four years). Labour's popular advantage over the Tories on public services is likely to shrink as public services continue to decline; for the moment, though, Blair's party still enjoys a slight lead.

On the economy and public services, then, the voters are inclined to vote Labour. Their support is unenthusiastic, and many voters will simply not bother to vote. Turnout last time fell to a historically low 59 percent, and while postal-vote reforms are likely to swell the numbers on May 5 (with fraudulent votes among others), the Don't Knows and Don't Cares will still be a major party between them. But unless the polls are substantially wrong, Tony Blair is

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cruising to a third term with a large majority.

Are there any issues that threaten to obstruct this? One might suppose that the Iraq war would exert some influence on the election. Some American conservatives regard it as a referendum on the war and will treat a Blair victory as a vindication. They are matched in Britain by anti-war critics on the left who highlight the war to weaken the prime minister. And the only major party to oppose the war—the Liberal Democrats—originally hoped it would win them left-wing votes from Labour. Yet none of this seems to be happening.

The popular attitude, shared by both main parties, is borrowed from Basil Fawlty: "Don't Mention the War." Blair sees it as a weakness because it revives last year's belief that he misled the country in order to support Bush. The Tories supported the war—their manifesto reiterates that support—which complicates their criticism of Blair's general trustworthiness. And the Lib-Dems have found that the voters seem more interested in other policies. Insofar as it has any short-term influence, Iraq will persuade a few Labour left-wingers to abstain or vote Lib-Dem. No more than that.

It is a fortunate accident that the rising anti-Americanism in Britain has occurred simultaneously with a rising Euro-skepticism.

Its long-term influence in Britain is more sinister and should worry Americans. Because Blair undoubtedly exaggerated the immediate threat of Saddam Hussein's WMDs—far more, incidentally, than President Bush ever did—Iraq has weakened the Anglo-American link. A small majority of Brits supported the Iraq war at the time, but many of them now feel deceived. They blame Blair for being too subservient to Bush. It will, as a result, be far harder for a future prime minister to commit Britain to support U.S. intervention in some future crisis.

It is a fortunate accident that this rising anti-Americanism in Britain has occurred simultaneously with a rising Euro-skepticism. Otherwise, the Brits might have found themselves embracing a common European foreign policy in response to a war that they came to reject. Paradoxically, that result would be quite welcome to Blair, a Euro-federalist, even if it were inspired by anger at his policy. He has taken major steps toward involving the U.K. in a European defense structure separate from NATO. The Tories, who remain the principal Atlanticist party (despite their spat with the White House over the party's perceived inconstancy on Iraq), are firmly opposed to this. And if Blair wins a third term, the U.S. will depend heavily on their continued resistance.

A second cluster of issues that might have been expected to influence the election includes immigration, crime, and the cultural transformation of Britain. Opinion polls show unmistakably that the Blair government is vulnerable on these issues and that Tory policies—for instance, more effective control of immigration—have overwhelming popular support. Events have come to the Tories' aid as well: The case of an Algerian terrorist who killed a policeman after twice escaping deportation seems to support the Tory claims that crime is rising and the immigration system is in chaos. Even the media have helped by treating the Tory policies as "controversial" and thus keeping them, rather than health and education, on the front page.

Some Tories are despondent because none of this has produced much movement in the polls. If anything, there has been a slight movement toward Labour. Such a reaction is premature: Polls may not tell the full story, especially on issues such as crime and immigration. First of all, where the media and other cultural institutions all send out the message that support for immigration control is "racist" or "nativist," respondents are likely to keep their opinions to themselves. In recent elections, moreover, the Tories have significantly outperformed the polls. Second, the populist Tory pitch for "more police" or "controlled immigration" runs up against the fact that in recent years traditional institutions have been colonized by political correctness.

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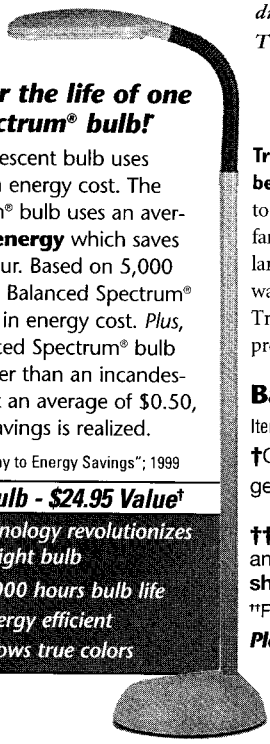

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"More police" was a better slogan when the police were tough on criminals and respectful to the middle class. Today, it sometimes seems as if the cops have reversed those attitudes. So the Tories have to persuade the voters that they really mean it—that they will embark on a much broader reform program of restoring common sense to the public sector rather than simply hiring more "police community coordination officers."

Such a broad reform program, however, would require serious intellectual investment in both shaping new policies and transmitting them to the voters—and not just on crime, immigration, and cultural change. What has handicapped the Tories is not the vigorous populist campaign they have been waging in recent weeks—that's the Left's self-serving analysis—but their timidity over policy formation in the last eight years.

On the central election issues of the economy and public spending, their policy has been scarcely distinguishable from Labour's. Both promise a sustained rise in public spending and either no tax cuts at all (Labour) or minuscule ones (the Tories). As a result, the Tories have disappointed their own supporters, given the public too restricted a choice, and ratified New Labour's shift of resources from the private to the public sector. In the words of a *Sunday Business* editorial, the British people are "sleepwalking to social democracy."

Despite the present somnolent prosperity of London, all the figures point to future economic difficulties. In particular there is a significantly increased weight of government on the society. Public employment, public spending, and the burden of public regulation are all rising sharply. The overall share of GDP taken by government has risen from 37.5 percent in 1997 to 42.5 percent today. And Britain's competitiveness in the world economy has fallen from a ranking of ninth in 1997 to 17th today. In other words the Thatcherite "exceptionalism" that has recently distinguished the British economy from the failing social-democratic countries of Europe is gradually being eroded by New Labour.

If the Tories can alert the British people to this by May 5, they may yet derail Tony Blair's coronation. But the hour is very late. **NR**

■ THE NATION

Wallis's Politics

Not to be confused with God's. Or are they?

RAMESH PONNURU

In 1995, Jim Wallis was arrested for protesting against welfare reform in the Capitol Rotunda. In 1983, he was arrested in the Rotunda for protesting the MX missile. But these days, Wallis is more likely to be meeting lawmakers than breaking laws when he is on Capitol Hill. Senate Democrats invited him to a conference in January, and Senate Republicans have consulted with him about their anti-poverty agenda. His influence is even more pronounced in the media. Wallis has shared his insights with Tim Russert and yukked it up with Jon Stewart. His new, best-selling book, *God's Politics*, has been widely reviewed.

His basic message is twofold: Democrats should be more accommodating of religion in public life; but religion does not have to be understood as Jerry Falwell understands it. One of the constant refrains of his book and his op-eds is that Jesus is not "pro-rich, pro-war, and only pro-American."

Wallis has long edited *Sojourners*, which is generally described as a magazine for left-wing evangelical Christians. In recent years, however, he has moved, at least rhetorically, to the center. He insists that he has no partisan agenda. He says he has no interest in being part of a religious Left. "People are hungry for a better dialogue," he says, "not the monologue of the religious Right."

But it's Democrats who have been most interested in his ideas. Republicans have talked to Wallis about a few discrete issues—such as Bush's faith-based initiative, which Wallis supports. Democrats, on the other hand, are listening to Wallis's advice on how to "frame" issues and borrowing his lines. Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid has said that he wants to make the budget "a moral document." The words come straight from Wallis. The Democrats seem to think that Wallis offers a way to overcome their deficit among "values voters," a topic on which they have been fixated since the election.

So does Wallis. As he writes in his book,

> If the Democrats could take the opportunity of a political defeat to really reassess their language and style, the way they morally frame public policy issues, and their cultural disconnect with too many Americans including many people of faith, they could transform the political discourse. But it will require a serious re-assessment. And if they are further willing to re-examine their positions on some of the cultural/moral issues the Republicans beat them with in 2004, they could virtually change the political landscape. If the Democrats could be persuaded by both good political sense and sound moral values to moderate some of their positions by becoming anti-abortion without criminalizing an agonizing and desperate choice, and being pro-family without being anti-gay, they would change politics in America by giving permission to millions of voters who would naturally vote for them except for the cultural and moral divide they feel with Democratic language and policies.

Many Democrats find elements of the Wallis strategy attractive. It indulges their sense that Christian conservatives are hypocrites, betraying Jesus by smiting the downtrodden and exploiting the environment. It caters to their belief that they are already doing the Lord's work by helping the poor, and need only advertise the fact.

But Wallis's major advice to the Democrats is likely to prove unhelpful. Some of it, indeed, they will ignore. About a third of Wallis's book is concerned with foreign policy. He is, if not a pacifist, a near pacifist. He is also anti-military. In 2003, he wrote, "There is no doubt in my mind that the importance the churches and the peace movement placed on protecting the innocents during the pre-war debate was very influential in keeping them from being directly targeted by military planners." (Wallis's move to moderation in rhetoric is not complete.) Democratic politicians are well aware that pacifism is not the ticket to electoral success and are not going to follow Wallis

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in declaring that God commands it.

What seems to be catching on among Democrats is the idea that they should present the standard liberal arguments about government programs in moral and religious terms. "Reframing" issues is very in with Democrats these days. Their other major post-election guru, Berkeley linguistics professor George Lakoff, is peddling the notion that what Democrats need to do is present the same ideas they have always had in new language (though in Lakoff's case the new language would remain secular). That's not what Wallis has in mind. "I have been clear from the start that this isn't just about language," he says. "If you want a few Bible verses or a few good hymns to repeat, then I'm the wrong person to talk to." He is not "just trying to get Democrats to sound different and then maybe win elections." But that's exactly what the Democrats are interested in.

Yet a religious "reframing" may not achieve their goal. If Republicans openly defended the view that successful people should not be concerned about poverty or that the environment does not deserve protection, then Wallis's "prophetic" challenge to them would make sense. As it is, Republicans will always be able to retort that they too believe in lifting the poor and stopping pollution—that they simply disagree with Democrats about methods. Jim Wallis predicted that welfare reform would cause a "hurricane of human suffering." Republicans and moderate Democrats in Congress thought it would do the poor a world of good. The Bible does not settle who was right about the reform, but the evidence of post-reform poverty rates seems to favor the politicians.

The comparison to the politics of abortion is instructive. Republicans have used that issue to pry religious voters from the Democratic coalition. Democrats may think they can use poverty and the environment to win them back—after all, the Lord said more about poverty than about abortion. But while Republicans claim to be interested in protecting the environment and fighting poverty, and even in deploying the federal government in both efforts, most Democrats do not, as a matter of principle, believe that the law should protect human fetuses against abortion.

Then there is the question of what new voters Wallis-influenced Democrats would be picking up. There is a religious Left in American politics, but it is small, and it is already reliably Democratic. Democrats could try to get more left-wing religious voters to the polls, but the payoff would be low. If the constituency the Democrats have in mind is the red-state values voters, on the other hand, they have a different problem. That group does include a lot of voters, but they are unlikely to vote for the Democratic platform, even if it is described in religious language. A person who is voting Republican because he opposes abortion and same-sex marriage is unlikely to vote Democratic because Howard Dean or Jim Wallis tells him that God wants him to protect the environment.

Some voters, meanwhile, would be put off by an explicitly religious appeal. Non-religious swing voters who generally vote Democratic because of their concerns about "theocracy" might stop preferring the Democrats if they were constantly quoting the Gospels. And even mildly or strongly religious voters might not like Democratic God talk. They might decide that Democrats were presenting themselves as morally superior to them, and reject them accordingly.

Republican God talk has the same potential drawback, of course, but it might be worse for Democrats for two reasons. The Democrats already have the burden of being seen as cultural elitists who look down on Middle America. And conservative moralism tends to be allied with tradition, whereas liberal moralism tends to be innovative. The former can thus be presented as humble submission to the wisdom of the past, whereas the latter inescapably has the air of a vanguard trying to pull backward and unenlightened people into agreement with a new orthodoxy.

Democrats could, of course, try changing some of their positions on cultural issues as well as making their rhetoric on all issues more religious. Wallis wants Democrats to criticize sex and violence in movies and video games. They would probably profit by doing so, and by calling for more measures to help parents monitor their children's leisure time (such as the V-chip) and for restrictions on the entertainment industry's marketing of its products to children. Some loss of Hollywood donations would be worth the extra votes.

But on other issues, the advice seems faulty. Wallis's preferred stance of opposing same-sex marriage while supporting civil unions was tried, last year, by John Kerry. Perhaps because Kerry was unwilling to do much to forestall same-sex marriage—an unwillingness that seems, on the evidence of *God's Politics*, to be shared by Wallis—it did not do him much good.

Wallis believes that we should fight abortion by providing poor people with jobs and health care. Hillary Clinton and Ted Kennedy have recently taken a somewhat similar line. They place more emphasis on promoting contraception than Wallis does, and they are vocal supporters of legal abortion while he is not one. But all three share a belief that the abortion rate should be reduced without criminalizing the choice to abort. When Senator Clinton gave a speech along these lines, pundits swooned. But "safe, legal, and rare" has already been a Democratic mantra for 13 years now. Doubtless it is a

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smarter political slogan than "abortion is wonderful" would be. That doesn't mean that repeating it will win new votes. And it raises an obvious question: If Democrats think abortion is such a tragedy and want to reduce its incidence, why are they against any legal restrictions on it and, indeed, for its subsidization?

A few liberal writers have given Democrats better advice than anything Wallis offers: What Democrats need to do about social issues, they say, is to get them out of the courts. Liberals' political muscles atrophied, these writers say, because they relied on courts to do the heavy lifting; they failed to build strong popular followings for abortion rights and the like. Law professor Burt Neuborne recently noted in *The American Prospect* that church-state litigation has cost liberals dearly in return for very little.

> When I was national legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union during the Reagan years and the board had sent me out to argue my umpteenth creche case, I wrote a memo saying that I didn't take the job to stamp out the Virgin Mary. Is it worth alienating people in the red states who might vote for a minimum-wage bill or back economic policies that do not savage the poor just to make a lawyer's point about separating church and state?

Wallis complains in his book about "secular fundamentalists" who deny religion a voice in the public square, but he doesn't say much about the courts. If I were a Democratic politician who wanted my party to thrive in the future and had enough clout with liberals to speak my mind—if I were someone like Ted Kennedy—I would sponsor a constitutional amendment to take the same-sex marriage issue away from the courts. Most Democrats believe the public will come around on its own to supporting same-sex marriage. So why spend the next ten years losing elections because courts are forcing the issue ahead of schedule?

It may be that the modern liberal conception of individual rights, and of the courts' role in vindicating those rights, is too deeply rooted in the Democratic psyche to be removed. But what the Democrats need isn't Jim Wallis's "prophetic voice." What they need is for *Roe* to fall. **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY**

What to Do About the Gas 'Crisis'

Maybe nothing

JERRY TAYLOR &
PETER VAN DOREN

DESPITE what you may have heard, oil and gasoline prices have yet to reach record levels—once we adjust for inflation. Even so, the gasoline price spike that began in the fall of 2002 is the second most dramatic in American economic history—steeper than those in 1973, 1990, and 2000, and nearly as great as that experienced between 1979 and 1981. A back-of-the-envelope calculation finds that the average household today spends between $63 and $79 a month more for gasoline than it did just three years ago.

Perhaps the absence of an identifiable villain has dampened political outrage. Oil companies are making record profits, but there's no evidence that they're holding anything back from the market. Likewise, neither terrorists nor Iraqi insurgents have had any significant impact on OPEC production. Global oil production was 66.8 million barrels a day in 2002, 69.2 million in 2003, 72.5 million in 2004, and is at record levels in 2005.

Regardless, gasoline prices aren't particularly consequential in the grand scheme of things. Sure, we're approaching the record prices paid for gasoline in 1981—about $2.42 a gallon in today's dollars—but on average we're a bit more than half again as wealthy today as we were then. If we consider gasoline prices in relation to per capita disposable income, they are only 58 percent of what they were in 1981, 44 percent of what they were in 1955, and about 90 percent of what they were in 1972. That probably explains why gas-guzzlers are still selling as well as ever and politicians are hearing little outrage from constituents.

Mr. Taylor is director of natural-resource studies at the Cato Institute, and Mr. Van Doren is editor of Cato's *Regulation* magazine.

What's driving the oil market is demand—not primarily from American SUVs, mind you, but from the awakening economic giant that is China. U.S. consumption grew by about 700,000 barrels a day between 2002 and 2004, but Chinese consumption grew more than twice as fast: by 1.47 million barrels a day. But, even accounting for China, global oil consumption has increased by only 5.3 percent since 2002. How could that have resulted in a near doubling of world oil prices? There are two reasons.

First, the excess production capacity that characterized the world oil market since the price collapse of 1986 had finally all but disappeared by 2002. Accordingly, the recent surge in demand caught the market short. The only way to increase supply substantially is for producers to spend billions of dollars on new production capacity that won't come online for several years hence. Producers, however, fear another boom-and-bust cycle of over-investment followed by a price collapse. That explains why the recent surge in oil prices has not led to a corresponding surge of new supply for the market.

Second, consumers have been slow to adjust their behavior in response to rising prices. Trading in SUVs for Dodge Neons, moving closer to work, and rearranging commute routines to take advantage of mass transit and car-pooling can be costly in time and money. Motorists aren't about to pay those costs without evidence that the price hikes are here to stay. Even then, consumers may not respond as robustly as they have in the past, given that those increased gas prices are less of an annoyance thanks to higher incomes.

With both supply and demand relatively inelastic in the short run—meaning that neither responds very much to price signals—small changes in either will lead to very large price movements.

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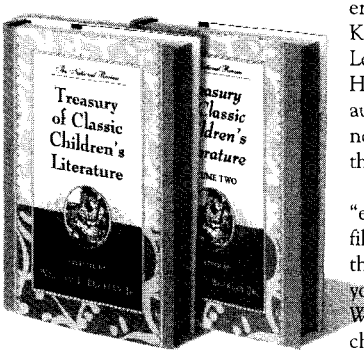

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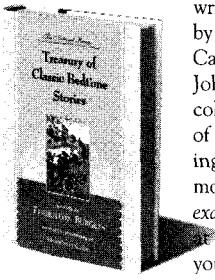

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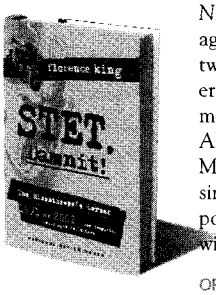

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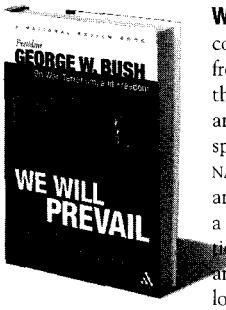

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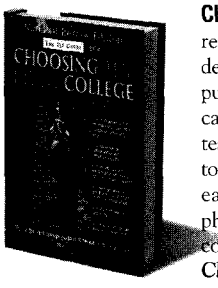

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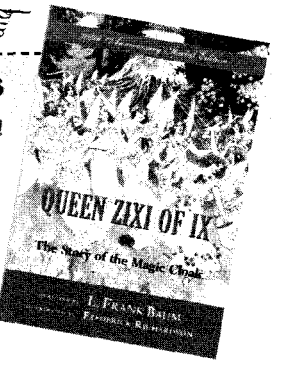

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That's because it takes a big price spike to get producers to cough up even a little more product and to get consumers to moderate their demand for oil.

How long will the current spike last? That depends on a couple of things. If the recent increase in demand is for consumption in the here-and-now, only two events will reverse the tide. The first is new supply—which could be several years into the future given the lag time between investment and production. The second is a break in demand, which could occur if China's economy cools off, if the global economy slides into a new recession, or if persistently high prices begin to encourage conservation and fuel switching.

However, if the oil demand we've witnessed is partially driven by inventory buildup, prices may fall when inventories are full or when investors become convinced that possible profits tomorrow are worse bets than sure profits today. Oil would then flow out of inventories, demand for oil would decline with speculators out of the market, and prices could come crashing down.

The majority view among market analysts is that the former story is more likely to be the case than the latter. Yet oil inventories have been growing steadily over the past year and storage capacity is dwindling. Accordingly, a price collapse cannot be ruled out—which further explains why producers are leery of spending billions for new production capacity.

Things could get worse before they get better. In a tight market with inelastic supply and demand, anything that interrupts supply—political unrest in Venezuela, Nigeria, or Iran, terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, increased insurgent activity in Iraq, hurricanes in the Caribbean, industrial accidents in refineries or along oil pipelines—could increase prices dramatically. Similarly, surges in demand from continued economic growth, unseasonable weather, or even currency revaluation in China could feed the spiral.

But things will get better—eventually. While both oil supply and demand are relatively inelastic in the short run, both have been shown to be quite elastic in the long run. The events of the 1979–1981 price spike caution against underestimating the ability of market actors to respond to high oil prices, given time.

The federal government can do little about high oil prices because it can do little about global oil supply or demand. Investment decisions by oil companies and OPEC nations determine the former, and global economic growth explains the latter.

While both oil supply and demand are relatively inelastic in the short run, both have been shown to be quite elastic in the long run.

The federal government could increase supply by opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to drilling along with other potentially lucrative fields off our coasts. Even so, it would likely take a decade before congressional action translated into significant quantities of new oil. Regardless, the effect on prices would not be as great as is sometimes advertised. Producing a million barrels of oil a day from ANWR, for example, would increase global oil supply by 1.4 percent, which would translate into a 14 percent reduction in world oil prices, all things being equal. Thus, were ANWR pumping today, we'd be paying about $47 a barrel for oil rather than $55.

Gasoline prices to a large extent track oil prices, so there's not much the government can do about prices at the pump beyond repealing state laws that mandate retail-price floors and ending regulations in some states that prohibit major oil companies from owning gas stations. Few people are aware of the extent to which state lawmakers have conspired to raise gasoline prices artificially in an ill-advised effort to protect "mom and pop" gas stations from competition.

Raising automobile fuel-efficiency standards is a bad idea. The Congressional Budget Office reports that tightening standards would increase the sticker price of new vehicles more than the savings in reduced fuel costs over the lifetime of the vehicle. It's also unclear whether it would reduce gasoline consumption. That's because the average fuel efficiency of new Japanese vehicles sold in the United States is well beyond today's regulatory requirement. Accordingly, Japanese companies could conceivably *increase* sales of SUVs, pickup trucks, and minivans without running afoul of new regulations.

Cutting gasoline taxes would work no better. Retailers who cut prices to reflect lower taxes would trigger an increase in gasoline demand. But because the supply of gasoline is relatively fixed in the short run, the only way to keep the pumps from running dry would be to raise prices back up to where they were prior to the tax cut. In short, cutting gasoline taxes now would simply redistribute revenues from the government to private companies without any effect on retail prices.

The perennial call to lessen regulation in order to increase the number of gasoline refineries misdiagnoses the problem. New refineries aren't being built for two reasons. First, investors have discovered that it's cheaper to increase the capacity of existing refineries than it is to build new ones. Second, competition in the refining sector is so ferocious that profits have traditionally been hard to come by. No profits, no investment. The only way for the federal government to increase refinery capacity beyond what the market provides is to subsidize refinery operators. Don't wait for the politicians or economists, however, to rally around that flag.

Finally, encouraging oil independence would worsen the problem. We buy oil from abroad because it's cheaper than producing that oil at home. Restricting imports would simply force reliance on more expensive fuels.

Happily enough, the lack of public outrage over fuel prices gives the market oxygen to solve its own problems. High prices will lead to increased conservation and greater incentives to produce both new supply and alternative fuels. Perhaps Americans are coming to realize that, however much they dislike high gasoline prices, governments have never demonstrated an ability to do anything positive about them. **NR**

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■ PUBLIC POLICY II

Deciding Abortion

The key questions

DANIEL OLIVER

THE pro-abortion and anti-abortion forces are warships passing in the night. Their slogans, "pro-choice" and "pro-life," don't engage the central issue that divides them, which is, what actually happens in an abortion. Neither group really disagrees with the other's slogan. None of the opponents of abortion would object to a woman's choosing to do what she wanted with a tumor or some other unwanted tissue growing on or in her body. On that issue they would be pro-choice. And no ordinary supporter of abortion would argue that a woman has a right to choose to do what she wants with her grandmother, or her infant daughter. In those cases, they would be pro-life, not pro-choice.

Nor was "choice"—understood as a woman's right to choose to terminate the life of a person—authorized by the Supreme Court in *Roe* v. *Wade*. What the Court decided in that case was that during the period before the fetus was viable (which the Court, writing in 1973, said usually occurred at 28 weeks but could occur earlier, even at 24 weeks) a woman could not be prohibited from exercising her "right to privacy"—which included choosing to have an abortion. The Court did not hold that a woman had an unqualified right to destroy something that was a person. "If the State is interested in protecting fetal life after viability, it may go so far as to proscribe abortion during that period, except when it is necessary to preserve the life or health of the mother." The Court went on, in another decision handed down the same day, to define "health" so expansively as to put severe limits on states' practical ability to protect fetal life after viability. But that holding does not alter the fact that the Court has never explicitly held that a woman has an absolute right to destroy something that it recognizes as a person.

What was particularly provocative in the Court's decision was its "legislating" its own definition of life, i.e., "viability," despite a disingenuous disclaimer ("We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins"). By not calling the fetus "life," the Court could pretend that it had not authorized the destruction of life.

Neither "life" nor "choice," therefore, is really the issue in the abortion dispute. And when we talk about "life" or "human life" we really mean "human being" or "person," as in Mother Teresa or Yasser Arafat—or "personhood"—i.e., the nature of someone essentially like us and entitled to the same protection of the law.

If life is only what we say it is, and begins only when we say it does, then we can say anything we like and we can never be incorrect.

The first and central issue in the abortion debate is whether the fetus is a person. The second issue is how we should behave if we can't conclusively decide the first issue. Is a fetus a person or simply part of the body of the woman in which it resides? What is life or personhood, and when does it begin? Is it something we ourselves define—as an umpire calls balls and strikes, which are neither balls nor strikes till he calls them? Or is life something that exists independent of whatever we mortals may think?

If life is only what we say it is, and begins only when we say it does, then—acting through the state—we can say anything we like and we can never be incorrect. We could say life begins when a child turns two. We could always change our minds, and legislate a different definition, but we could not then say that the

Mr. Oliver is a senior director at White House Writers Group in Washington, D.C. He was chairman of the Federal Trade Commission from 1986 to 1989.

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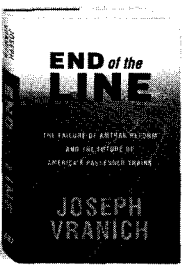

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previous definition had been incorrect. Of course, if the state cannot be incorrect in defining the fetus as not-a-life, it can also not be incorrect in defining a black person as not-a-life or not-a-person. We tried that once, but subsequently found that definition objectionable. Not just incorrect, but morally wrong.

Alternatively, we can agree that the existence of life is independent of whatever we may think, and see our task as trying to determine, as opposed to defining, when life exists. Two places we could look to for guidance in making that determination are tradition and science. Civilized states have for generations considered the fetus a person. But that tradition is often regarded as suspect—a vestige of religious morality in the post-religious polity. Science also turns out not to be much help. The issue in dispute is not whether that-which-is-growing-inside-the-woman, at whatever stage it has reached (and for simplicity's sake I will call that entity a "fetus"), is *some* kind of life. Science agrees it is alive and that it has the DNA of the human species, and DNA distinct from its mother's. The science of statistics can tell us (and did tell the Supreme Court) when a fetus, on average, is viable outside the womb, and medical science can move, and since *Roe* v. *Wade* has moved, that date earlier. But viability becomes the factor that determines whether the fetus is a person only if we, the people, say it is—or if we, the people, let the Supreme Court say it is. Science itself does not tell us whether the fetus is a person.

If neither tradition nor science can tell us whether the fetus is a person, what should guide us in deciding whether to allow abortions? What should we do when we don't know something and have no way of figuring it out? We need to find a secular principle that will guide our behavior.

There are two possible errors that can be made in legislating that behavioral decision. One is allowing abortions if the fetus is a person. Why that is an error requires no explanation. The other is prohibiting abortions if the fetus is not a person. That would be an error because we, through the apparatus of the state, would have interfered for no valid reason with the right of a person to choose to act in accordance with her own wishes.

But the two possible errors are not equally culpable. Making a mistake that results in killing a human being is more culpable than making a mistake that only prohibits someone from removing a growth in her body, even if that prohibition results in emotional or financial distress. Even people who support abortion should agree with that.

Now let's try a thought experiment. Suppose a building is to be demolished as part of a program to construct free housing for the poor. Millions of dollars and many months have been spent preparing for the demolition of the building. Any additional delay, by even a single hour, will result in huge costs. The building has been carefully inspected to be sure that no one is in it. Demolition Day arrives, but moments before the explosive charges are to be detonated, a bystander cries out that he has spotted a figure moving at a window. A dozen others saw something too—but all agree that what they saw was a dog. Does demolition proceed? Probably, unless the animal-rights people can find an accommodating judge to block it. At the very least, the many millions spent and the benefits pending would be weighed against the life of the dog.

But now suppose a dozen different people, all credible citizens, say they were watching the same window and are certain that what they saw was not a dog, but a small boy. What would be done? Can there be any doubt? If there were *any* chance that the life seen in the building was human, demolition would not proceed. The millions spent would count for nothing. Everyone would apply an innate "precautionary principle" and not accept the risk of killing a human being.

The Precautionary Principle is currently being used by many to counter the current presumption in favor of developing new technologies and products. The Precautionary Principle states that scientific certainty of harm is not required as a prerequisite for taking action to avert it. The most widely cited version of this principle in the environmental context is Principle 15 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development: "Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation."

That sentence applied to the abortion debate would read, "If there is a chance that a human being may be irreversibly damaged by an abortion, lack of certainty about the personhood of the fetus shall not be used as a reason for allowing abortions."

In the case of demolishing the building, in our thought experiment, the precautionary principle that resides in each of us would lead us all to opt for life: If in doubt, take no chance of killing a human being. Isn't that the situation with abortion? We have to make a choice, while not knowing whether the fetus is a human being. Those who do not oppose abortion should ask themselves how they can be sure the fetus is not a person, and why they are willing to risk being wrong on such an important matter. And those who oppose abortion should spend less time talking about being pro-life and more time asking how we should decide how to behave in the absence of certain knowledge about the humanity of the fetus. **NR**

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■ **RELIGION & SOCIETY**

The New Ireland

It's not Catholic, for one thing

ANTHONY DANIELS

THE death of the Pope presented the taoiseach (prime minister) of Ireland with a dilemma: Should he declare an official day of mourning or not? After all, Ireland is a country whose Catholicism, like that of Poland, has for centuries been intimately connected with its national identity and struggle for independence: and even the Jesuit-educated atheist of Cuba, Fidel Castro, decreed *three* official days of mourning for the Pope in his besieged tropical Communist redoubt.

But Ireland has a new secular religion, which one might call Multiculturalist Mammonism. The Mammonist wing of the new faith, represented by the head of an association of small businessmen, said that too much money would be lost by a day of mourning, hundreds of millions of dollars; while the taoiseach, the latest leader of Eamon de Valera's party of grim, bitter, Counter Reformationist Catholicism, said that Ireland was no longer a Catholic, but a multicultural, society.

Of course, it wasn't the reaction of the massed Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, and even Protestants of the Republic that the taoiseach feared: It was the rabidly secularist and anticlerical intelligentsia whom he wished not to offend (or dared not offend)—for hell hath no fury like a multiculturalist intellectual scorned.

How the whirligig of time brings in his revenges, and quickly too! No Catholic priest will now walk the streets of Dublin dressed in clerical garb, while across the water, in England, with its centuries-long tradition of anti-Catholicism, no Catholic priest would think of doing otherwise. It is true that, unlike in Mexico, there is as yet no law in Ireland confining priestly garb to the interiors of the churches themselves, but there might as well be. While the Church of England withers on the vine, the cardinal archbishop of Westminster has become a power in the land; but in Ireland, where once cabinet ministers bent the knee to bishops, no one takes much notice of what the Church thinks. Perhaps the moral of the story is that too close an identification of church with state always results in nemesis—for the church.

The anticlerical secularists in Ireland have managed to forge another identification of the Church, this time with pedophilia. Three percent of Ireland's convicted pedophiles are priests, and with the synthetic moral outrage that usually signifies a preconceived desire to destroy the power of an institution, the secularists have created an association in the public

Mr. Daniels is a doctor and writer in England. Among his books is *Utopias Elsewhere*.

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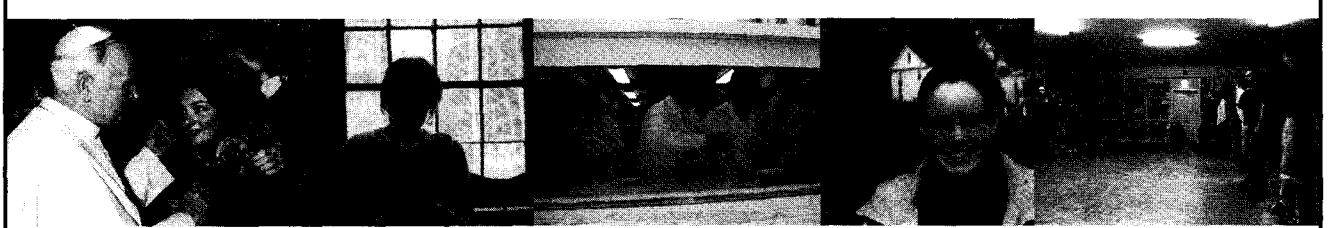

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mind between clerical collars and the sexual abuse of children.

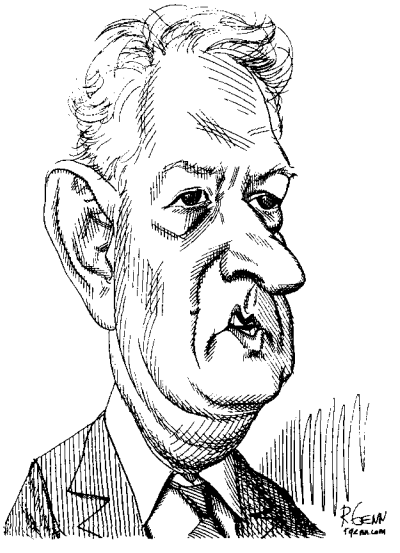
The destruction of ecclesiastical power in Ireland has not been instantaneous, of course. It started in the 1960s, with the arrival of television. Eighteen months after the first broadcast, a gadfly intellectual, Brian Trevaskis, appearing on the *Late Late Show*, called the new cathedral in Galway a monstrosity. It goes without saying that was right; it is a monstrosity. But to call so important a religious edifice anything other than splendid and magnificent was, at the time in Ireland, shocking; and worse still, Trevaskis went on to call the chairman of the building committee of the cathedral, none other than the bishop of Galway himself, a moron. As it happens, he was not a very popular man, known as "Cross" Brown, more because of his temper than because of his religious affiliation; but no bishop in Ireland could then be referred to in public in terms other than the deeply respectful.

The heavens, however, did not fall; not only did they not fall, but Trevaskis appeared on the television the following week, and the week after. It became possible openly to doubt the wisdom of Church prelates. (Incidentally, Brown's successor as bishop of Galway was the much-loved Eamonn Casey. He fathered a child—first denying that he had done so, then admitting it, and resigning in disgrace.)

A reform in the early Seventies, giving unmarried mothers a living allowance from the state, eventually resulted in a profound transformation of the social mores of the country. It hardly needs pointing out that such an allowance was against the teachings of the Church. Hitherto, the birth of a child to an unmarried woman was a scandal and a shame, attaching mainly to her; either the child was removed from her, or she was bundled off to a none too comfortable home for such mothers and babies run by the Church. But Ireland, however inward-looking it might have been, was not an entirely closed society: Printed and broadcast material was always available from Britain and America, and the harshness of the treatment of illegitimacy in Ireland began to seem anachronistic.

Thirty years later, 40 percent of Irish births are illegitimate, just as they are in Britain. The men of Ireland may be said to have voted against the teachings of the Church with their sperm. That this development is likely to be disastrous, both socially and for the children as individuals, is now almost unsayable in Ireland, because to say it is to be taken as expressing a wish to return to the old, harsh treatment of unwed mothers and their illegitimate offspring, to the old priest-ridden days when poverty and suffering was regarded as the glorious lot of Holy Ireland. Hence there is a silence on a matter of the greatest social importance, perhaps even an internalized evasion of the whole question.

Nevertheless, the influence of the Church on the state remained strong until very recently. In 1978, a future taoiseach, Charles Haughey, himself no exemplar of the Church's teaching on the sexual relations that should exist between men and women, introduced a bill to allow what had previously been forbidden in the Republic, namely male contraceptives—but, in a compromise to soothe the feelings of the Church, they were to be made available only to married couples on prescription of a doctor. It takes little effort of the imagination to understand how imperfectly this law was complied with; and the abortion issue soon eroded the Church's influence further. Five thousand Irishwomen a year (the American equivalent would be 227,000) were traveling to Britain for the operation. In 1983, the anti-abortion lobby, backed by the Church, wanted the Irish constitution amended so that abortion was forbidden not merely by statute, but constitutionally. A referendum was won; and a clause stating that human life must be protected as far as possible was inserted into the constitution.



Taoiseach Bertie Ahern

ROMAN GENN

In the famous "X" case, however—in which an unnamed 14-year-old girl was raped, became pregnant, and was prevented from traveling to England for an abortion—the supreme court held that the protection of the new clause extended to the mother as well as to an unborn child. If a mother was likely to commit suicide if she did not have an abortion, the operation was permissible. A second referendum on abortion approved a right to travel both to obtain information about the operation and to have the operation itself, while outlawing the operating in Ireland itself unless there was a danger to the mother's life, other than suicide. The rejection of abortion on demand on Ireland's soil, while protecting the right to obtain it in England, represents the last gasp of Ireland's Catholic conscience. In medical terms, it is Cheyne-Stokes breathing (first described by an Irish physician): the irregular and physiologically useless gasping that precedes death.

There are practically no more priestly vocations in Ireland, though within living memory it was the ambition of every family to have one son or daughter enter the Church. Now every family would like at least one software wizard or fund manager to glorify it; and so secular has the society become that even anticlericalism is now passé, unless the Church makes a slight move to recover its power.

Ireland is now one of the wealthiest countries in the world (markedly wealthier per capita than England), a transformation that has taken it less than 20 years to achieve. In large part, the transformation was based on the high academic standards set by the Christian Brothers and other Catholic educators, who are nevertheless frequently reviled by their very beneficiaries, pupils who do not want to acknowledge what the country owes to their teachers. And certainly, for the visitor, the overthrow of Catholicism means that the country has lost much of its unique, strong, amusing, moving, and discomfiting savor. It is more normal, less interesting, and happier than it once was. Real Irishmen now eat quiche and go to work when the Pope dies. **NR**

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What Went Right

How the U.S. began to quell the insurgency in Iraq

RICHARD LOWRY

"Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them."
—T. E. LAWRENCE

It is time to say it unequivocally: We are winning in Iraq.

If current trends continue, our counter-insurgent campaign in Iraq will be fit to be mentioned in the same breath as the British victory over a Communist insurgency in Malaysia in the 1950s, a textbook example of this form of war. Our counterinsurgency has gone through the same stages as that of the Brits five decades ago: confusion in the initial reaction to the insurgency, followed by a long period of adjustment, and finally the slow but steady erosion of the insurgency's military and political base. Even as there has been a steady diet of bad news about Iraq in the media over the last year, even as some hawks have bailed on the war in despair, even as Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has become everyone's whipping boy, the U.S. military has been regaining the strategic upper hand.

This doesn't mean the war couldn't still go wrong. "It's not over," says a top officer in Iraq. A key assassination, continued Sunni rejectionism, an inter-sectarian explosion, or something unforeseen—all could still derail us in Iraq. Nor does it mean that our effort is perfect. "I give us a B minus," says an administration official, a tough grader who is nonetheless an optimist. But it does mean that as of mid-April 2005 we are winning, just as surely as we were losing in the darkest days of the dual radical-Shia and radical-Sunni uprisings a year ago.

The basic approach of the Pentagon to the insurgency was right from the beginning. "The strategy was always political as well as military," says a Pentagon official. A counterinsurgency is never about simply killing enemy fighters the way it is—or at least seems—on a conventional battlefield. Insurgents have an endless capacity to replicate themselves, unless political conditions are created that drain them of support. If top policymakers always knew that intellectually, we have had to stumble our way to finding the correct ways to act on the insight.

Based on conversations with administration officials and key combatant commanders, this is the story of how, two years after the fall of Saddam, the U.S. has begun to win the war for Iraq.

'A NON-FUNCTIONING CITY THE SIZE OF DETROIT'

After a fairly straightforward routing of the dictator's regime, the military got a nasty surprise. "We thought that the regime would fall and have a hard landing, but that the society would have a soft landing," says Maj. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, commanding general of the 1st Armored Division, which had responsibility for Baghdad from Saddam's fall until April 2004. "We thought the infrastructure would be good by Middle Eastern and South Asian standards." Instead, the society had

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long ago suffered a hard landing, devastated by 30 years of tyranny. General Dempsey says of Baghdad, "Imagine a non-functioning city the size of Detroit."

"We found that the electricity infrastructure was incapable of meeting the needs of the city long before we arrived. At no time in the recent past did Baghdad have enough electricity to go 24 hours," he says. And: "The sewers were never running at more than 75 percent capacity. When we got there most of the sewage ran into the Tigris through the storm drains." And: "Trash was a huge problem. Imagine a city of 6 million where the trash system shuts down for a month." And there was no one else around to try to fix it.

Dempsey was starting from scratch. He had to go to the Iraqis, and determine who among them could help: "We tried to figure out who were the emerging leaders, who was trusted in the neighborhoods. We had them prioritize their needs to us. We didn't know much about the city and that's how we learned what the city needed." Then he set 90-day milestones for progress toward putting the city back together again. He drew on funds from CERP, the Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program. It was funded with money confiscated from Saddam's coffers after the war. "In the traditional army fight," he explains, "you can see success in the number of Republican Guard units taken off the map, and in the territory taken. We had to measure success around how we wanted Baghdad to look in June 2004."

But they were running a losing race against rising expectations. "Some of them expected that we'd come in and immediately have electricity, sewage, and water working," Dempsey says of the Iraqis. "That just wasn't happening. Some were very accepting and some others weren't—that's probably where you saw some of the insurgency."

Shia family in Baghdad, April 2003

The Sunnis wouldn't be satisfied, even with improvements. Dempsey explains: "The Baath party had supplied electricity to the Sunni areas. The [Sunni] Mansour district had 24-hour service. [Shia] Sadr City might have three hours." He remembers going to brief the city council on his plan to improve and rationalize the electricity system, giving everyone in Baghdad equal service. He expected his eminently reasonable proposal to be welcomed by all. Instead, "the Shias on the city council were overjoyed; the Sunnis took it as a net loss."

'WE STARTED GETTING HAMMERED'

That was just a taste of the broader Sunni disaffection from the new Iraq that would help fuel the insurgency. It really began to bite in August 2003. "We started getting hammered, and we're saying, 'What's going on here?'" says an administration official. It took time to figure out the nature of the insurgency, putting the military in the uncomfortable position of fighting a complex, multifaceted foe it didn't entirely understand.

In general, post-invasion Iraq was a tinderbox. "There are plenty of unemployed men, there is plenty of propaganda from the mosques, and there is plenty of ammunition. All you need to make the insurgency go is money," says another administration official. And there was plenty of that too, from Saddam's stash, much of it spirited away to Syria. In restive al-Anbar province, the $200 someone might be paid for an attack against the Americans equals six months' salary. It makes it a good deal, especially if 72 virgins await you if you fail. As the administration official puts it, "You say, 'What the hell?'"

Conditions were ideal for an insurgency in other ways. Sunni tribal leaders had made money from smuggling—smuggling of the sort that fed the insurgency cash, men, and matériel from Syria—for centuries. Previously they had been bought by Saddam; now some of them were bought by the insurgents. And the tribal organization of Iraqi society, with its tight bonds of trust within certain groups, created a natural cell structure for the insurgency.

In the meantime, in formerly repressed Shia slums, such as Sadr City, there was always a latent violence that Saddam's murderous regime had kept under wraps. "If you remove that violence from the top, the potential violence from underneath is unleashed," says an administration official. That is the dynamic that fed a Moqtada al-Sadr, whose father had been killed by Saddam, but who was ready to send armed men into the street to secure an outsize place in the new Iraq.

The insurgents were a formidable challenge to a military with awe-inspiring technological capabilities. "Our advantages are the range of our weapons and our sensors," says a Pentagon official. "Fighting from 50 feet neutralizes those advantages. Fighting in the open, how long could the Iraqis last? Two weeks. The insurgency? It's two years and counting."

"We weren't looking for it," an administration official says of the insurgency. "The Army was not ready to fight an insurgency." Some generals, not all by any means, were still primed for a conventional fight of the sort we planned for against the Soviets in the Cold War or waged against Saddam in the Persian Gulf War. Also, every insurgency is a little different, and is likely to catch even the best-prepared military unawares.

Critics have pounded the Pentagon for the inadequate armoring of Humvees. But Humvees aren't designed to be used in combat—"they are four-wheel-drive pickup trucks with flat sides," says a Pentagon official. They were inadequate only when their original purpose as behind-the-lines transport was eclipsed by the rise of the front-less insurgency. In the new

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circumstances, even *tanks* were inadequately armored. We have lost a stunning 80 M-1 battle tanks. They are most heavily armored in the front to do battle with other tanks. In the streets of Iraq, insurgents attack them from behind.

In countless ways, then, the fight against the insurgency has involved learning and adaptation, and those ways are large (e.g., the order of thousands of armored Humvees) and small. One officer who served in the Sunni Triangle describes getting a tip from an Iraqi who said his neighbor was putting together roadside bombs in his home. "We said, 'Great, what's his address?'" The streets didn't have addresses. "We said, 'Okay, point it out to us.'" He wasn't willing to take the risk of being seen with Americans. How to raid the right house? Eventually, our troops found a way (although one they would prefer not to see described in print).

Supporters of Moqtada al-Sadr, Najaf, August 2004

The biggest adjustment was one of understanding. Since every insurgency exists in a particular cultural and political context, you can't fight it effectively until you thoroughly understand that context. That takes on-the-ground experience, and time.

Maj. Gen. Raymond Ordierno commanded the 4th Infantry Division in the Sunni Triangle from April 2004 to the beginning of 2005. "We suspected some resistance would be left," he says, "but we were a bit surprised by the insurgency. We had to adjust how we did business." He cites the bewildering complex of tribal leaders, family lines, and Baath-party ties: "We had to understand the relationships." That required a crash course in tribal Arab culture: "We don't understand what it is to be part of a tribe and how they understand family ties. It's different from our culture. It is difficult. But we are learning it over time."

"Some say we missed the insurgency entirely, but that's a bad rap," says General Dempsey. "We saw this thing building, but it just takes time to build relationships in that culture." It was winning the trust of the people—to get intelligence tips and to deny the insurgents public support—that was key. But that couldn't be done overnight: "In the same circumstance, if we knew exactly what was coming, the culture still would have presented obstacles. If the trust and confidence we had from the public was no better, we weren't going to get better intelligence than we did initially."

Slowly, things came into focus. The former regime elements (FREs) were the core of the insurgency. At least some of them were apparently directed by Saddam to secret themselves in safe houses north and south of Baghdad and wait to strike after the U.S. invasion. Others had fled to Syria, which they used as a sanctuary to direct and feed the fight against the Americans. The FREs had a loose system of leadership, but no clear leader.

Their biggest pool of support came from Sunni rejectionists and fence-sitters (e.g., tribal leaders who might be coaxed into becoming rejectionists). On the edges of this core of the insurgency were criminals (Saddam emptied the jails in October 2002 in anticipation of the invasion), foreign Islamists (e.g., Zarqawi), indigenous Islamists (e.g., the Sunni radicals of the Muslim Clerics Association), and Shia extremists like Sadr. "They hate each other," an administration official explains, "but they have a common objective to drive us out."

The insurgency had a Leninist strategy of "worse is better." Make Iraq ungovernable, and perhaps get the chance to regain power. Most fundamentally it sought to sever the sinews of any functioning society—trust. American officers describe having Iraqi police officers who would talk to them candidly only if they were in a room without any other Iraqis. This atmosphere made working with Iraqis almost impossible. In one case, Iraqi police jumped out of the second-story windows of a police building when they saw Americans coming, to avoid being seen with them. Sometimes Iraqis would patrol only at American gunpoint.

The U.S. strategy became to use every instrument of power at our disposal (military, political, economic, etc.) to drive a wedge between the Sunni fence-sitters and the irredeemable elements of the insurgency—the criminals, the various Islamists, and the FREs. Attempts would be made to engage the Sunnis, while the other forces would be captured or killed. The strategy involved four main lines of operation—security, governance, basic services, and the economy—all of which complemented each other and had the goal of creating a legitimate Iraqi government that could look after its own security.

It was a blending of carrot and stick. There are two ways to try to keep someone from taking $200 to attack Americans: "You can raise the cost to someone of planting an IED [an Improvised Explosive Device] by making it more likely you will kill him, but also by providing alternatives that make him less likely to want to take the risk in the first place," says an administration official. Or as an officer in Iraq puts it, "You can't kill or capture everybody."

That's why infrastructure projects and other economic-development measures are so important. For ordinary Iraqis, who have no taste for the niceties of Leninism, better is simply better. The counterinsurgency is reminiscent of Rudy Giuliani's fight against crime in New York City. There is the same tough-minded commitment to taking down the bad guys, coupled with attention to the broader conditions—the "broken windows"—that foster crime, or, in Iraq, insurgents. "It's exactly like Rudy Giuliani fighting crime, except the criminals have automatic weapons and 155-rounds," says a Pentagon official.

MOHAMED MESSARA/EPA

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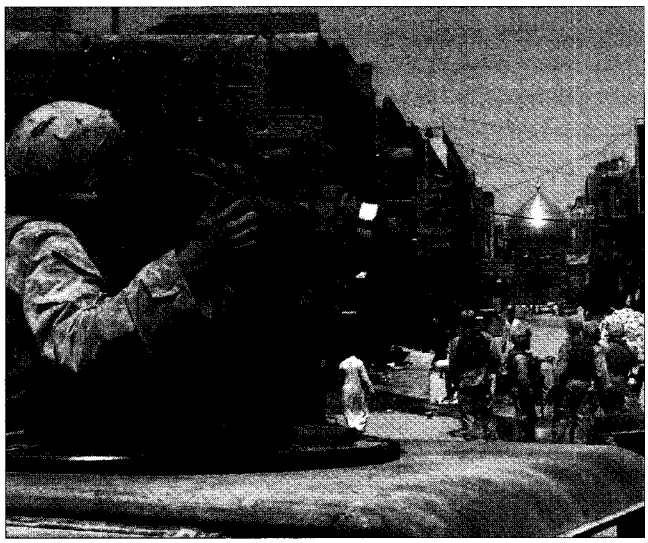
'WE REVERSED THE PARADIGM'

April 2004 began a period that ran through November 2004 when the insurgency presented stiff military challenges. In the spring, our position in Iraq seemed precarious to the point of collapse. "It could have gone either way," says an administration official. It went the right way, establishing the basis for important political developments.

In April, Moqtada al-Sadr seized key buildings in five southern Shia cities. Immediately, half of the Iraqi National Guard and police walked off the job. It fell to Dempsey's 1st Armored Division to clean up. By this time, Dempsey and his troops had gotten their footing in Iraqi politics and culture.



U.S. soldier mans rocket-launcher near Imam Ali Mosque, Najaf, August 2004

AHMED FADAAM/AFP

"We had a different understanding of the things that make you successful," Dempsey says. "A year earlier we might have been too imprecise and heavy-handed. A crucial question was, What is our information campaign? What do we tell the Iraqi people to get them to solve this problem before we have to, and if we have to, to make them see it as very deliberate and precise?" So the information campaign came first, and the military operation was supplementary to it. "We reversed the paradigm that we had lived with during my first 30 years in the Army," says Dempsey.

The campaign was about politics as much as military might. Dempsey moved first to take back the government buildings in all five cities. Sadr had an obvious political purpose in taking them in the first place: "Sovereignty was going to be transferred on 1 July. He wanted to establish a shadow government." Sadr also took the mosques: "He took over the mosques for financial reasons. There are significant monies associated with them because of the pilgrims." This is where it got especially tricky, since the U.S. couldn't be seen as disrespectful to these religious sites, especially the Mukhaiyam Mosque in Karbala and the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, two of Shia Islam's holiest sites.

Dempsey didn't hide his plans, but broadcast them far and wide, publicizing that he was going to systematically take back the cities, leaving Karbala and Najaf—the most sensitive tasks—for last. "We were giving the Iraqi people a sense that we were giving [Sadr] a chance to stand down," Dempsey says. "We were telling them that we were going to do it in a responsible fashion." This was a move calculated to exploit Sadr's political weakness. His uprising was a challenge not just to the U.S. but to the moderate Shia establishment, and most Shia didn't appreciate it. "He was unpopular," says an administration official. "He stopped commerce, stopped trade, stopped everyday life in Najaf and Karbala."

Dempsey realized that the operation needed Iraqi cover. In each area, Dempsey says, "we tried to find and empower one single Iraqi figure." For instance, in Najaf, Dempsey took aside one Iraqi leader and told him, "You are our guy, everything we do, we are going to explain it to you and say it's because you want us to do it." The information campaign and this sort of politicking were crucial to the overall campaign's success. "It couldn't have been done the previous year, because we just didn't understand it," says Dempsey.

Eventually, he went after Sadr's forces militarily. He beat them back into the mosques at Karbala and Najaf. "We decided not to go into the mosques," says Dempsey. "It was absolutely the right decision." There was a negotiated solution, with the U.S. giving up on its demand to arrest Sadr, who was wanted on a murder charge. It was an imperfect solution, but part of what we have learned is to settle for those. Sadr survived to fight another day, but he lost political support during the confrontation, rather than gaining it, as he might have if we had been heavy-handed. "This was very delicately done," says an administration official.

The fight in the south was just one part of April's double nightmare. Sunni militants probably always had a plan for an all-out assault on the U.S. occupation, but Sadr's uprising provided the perfect opening. "They took the opportunity to glom on to the Shia uprising with the goal of collapsing the entire coalition effort," says an administration official. In April, the insurgents attacked 15 different static locations, all of them lines of communications, bridges, roads, or supply routes. "It was planned and highly organized," says the official. "The Sunnis hurt us bad. People at the CPA [Coalition Provisional Authority] working in the Green Zone were eating off paper plates and food rations were cut."

But the U.S. held on. Even though it was hard to see at the time, April marked a turning point. "It was a strategic defeat for them, because they failed in their goals," an administration official says of the Sunnis. Altogether, it was a bad month for the radicals: "We killed thousands of Sadr's guys. We killed a s***load of Sunni extremists. It sent shock waves through both those movements."

Unfortunately, we started, then aborted, an attack on Fallujah. By the end, Sadr's forces were holed up in the mosque in Najaf and the Sunni insurgents had been pushed into Fallujah. Not an ideal result, but given how precarious the situation had been, hardly disastrous. And it meant conditions were tolerable enough for the next big political step, the handover of sovereignty from the Coalition Provisional Authority back to the Iraqis.

'LIBERATION RATHER THAN OCCUPATION'

A crucial moment in our Iraq project was little noticed at the time. In October 2003 there were three days of meetings at the Pentagon between top policymakers and CPA head Jerry

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Bremer and Gen. John Abizaid, head of the United States Central Command, to review where things stood. A decision was made to set deadlines for agreement on the Transitional Administrative Law (a.k.a. the temporary constitution), and, most important, on the termination of the CPA. At the White House, the date of June 30, 2004, was chosen for the handover—almost by throwing a dart at a calendar. There was nothing special about that date, except that it wasn't too far in the future.

Bremer had contemplated the CPA's lasting as long as three years. This would have meant that the occupation—the prime political liability for the U.S. in Iraq—would have dragged on and on. The post-invasion difficulties in Iraq have obviously brought plenty of criticisms of the Pentagon, some fair, some not (see my "What Went Wrong," NR, October 25, 2004). But as long as there is score-settling, it should be noted that the Pentagon was always consistent in wanting to end the occupation and get to elections as quickly as possible, and events over the last year have vindicated this approach.

"The idea that some of us had right from the beginning was that it was going to be crucial to emphasize the theme of liberation rather than occupation," says Douglas Feith, undersecretary of defense for policy. "At those October meetings, we got to get the CPA out of existence in the foreseeable future." Bremer took the decision back to Iraq and held to the deadlines for the Transitional Administrative Law and the handover. The deadlines were important. "It's not clear anything would have happened without a deadline," says Feith.

The transfer unlocked all sorts of positive forces. It meant, most fundamentally, that we realized that ultimate victory over the insurgency would have to be won by the Iraqis, with an assist from the United States. "The idea," says an administration official, "was to have the same relationship as with Karzai in Afghanistan—we're there to help him." This set up an entirely different political dynamic with the insurgency, which was no longer opposing an occupation government. "Now the insurgents were attacking a lawfully recognized sovereign government," says one official.

Capable Iraqis were encouraged to step forward in a way they hadn't been before. "We were looking at the Iraqis in the summer of 2003," explains Feith, "and they were not playing the role that we were hoping. They weren't stepping forward. There was a reluctance on the part of the Iraqis to play a prominent role in a CPA-led government."

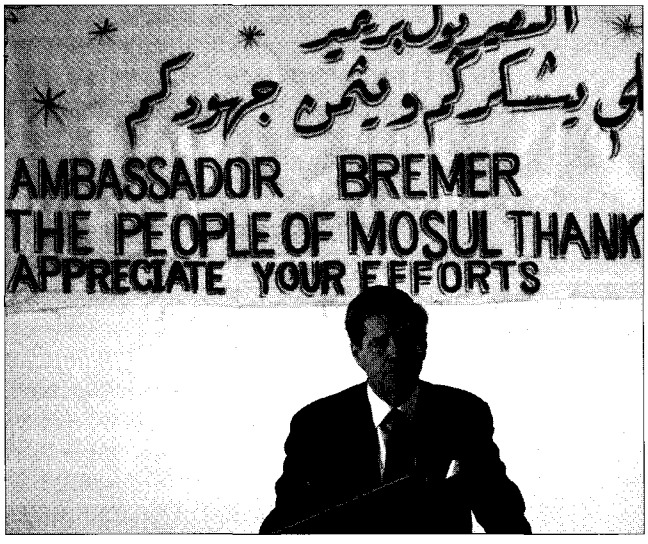
The transfer put the Iraqis at the forefront of the information campaign against the insurgency. And they knew what would work. The single most effective tool against the insurgency, a TV program that features unflattering interviews with captured insurgents every night at 9 P.M., was an Iraqi inspiration. It is the most watched program in Iraq. Maj. Gen. David Patreaus, who commanded the 101st Airborne during the assault on Baghdad and afterward and now is in charge of training Iraqis, says, "As an Iraqi told me the other day, 'We have seen the face of the insurgency and it is ugly.' There is nothing romantic or uplifting about the insurgents or what they are doing. They are just thugs and brutal criminals."

Finally, the Iraqi interim government gave the Iraqi security forces something at the very top of the chain of command to which they could be loyal. Within months, their performance had improved. "They had a sense that they were fighting for their own government," says Feith.

The U.S. had begun to piece together the puzzle of a successful counterinsurgency, and a big part of it was relinquishing political control, rather than monopolizing it. T. E. Lawrence had it right in his long-ago admonition to hand as much responsibility as possible to indigenous forces, even if they aren't fully prepared. Says an administration official, "He knew how to deal with the Arabs. We had to learn."

'A DIFFERENT KIND OF FIGHT'

In the meantime, the military was honing its nontraditional responsibilities down to a kind of art form. By the time he left in April 2004, Dempsey was an Iraq expert: "I'm from Bayonne, New Jersey. I thought I knew Bayonne. But there is nothing about Baghdad we didn't know about." By his departure, the sense of improvement was palpable. "We brought the city back to life in a very real way," he says.



Jerry Bremer at farewell ceremony in Mosul, June 2004

Crucially, the information he had picked up on the fly, the hard way, wouldn't be lost. "We tried to flatten the learning curve," says Dempsey. One of Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli's officers—Chiarelli's 1st Cavalry Division would take over Baghdad in April 2004—was embedded in Dempsey's headquarters for four months prior to Chiarelli's departure for Iraq. "Dempsey told me we have this $18.4 billion supplemental. He told me before we departed, 'You want to kind of reorient your guys, they are going to have to be overseeing a lot of this,'" says Chiarelli. He took his staff to Austin, Texas, to get seminars from the city management about basic services. "We knew we weren't going to make sewer-maintenance engineers out of our guys, but we understood the basics," says Chiarelli.

So he was ready for what met him in Baghdad. "Iraqis consistently told us, in varying order, we want the sewers fixed, the electricity fixed, the water fixed, and the trash picked up, and we want jobs and we want security," says Chiarelli.

ROSLAN RAHMAN/EPA

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That's what he set about doing. He worked with the governor and mayor, for instance, on improving the trash pickup, and trying to get people to stop throwing their trash on the ground through public-awareness commercials and information campaigns in the schools. Chiarelli acquired a kind of passion for trash, realizing its impact on the city and people's lives: "You and I know solid waste is ugly, but in Baghdad when garbage isn't picked up, in the winter, it rains and runs into the sewers and clogs up the sewers." He aimed to have trash picked up twice a week in Baghdad's neighborhoods, and plotted progress toward that goal on a map, with the neighborhoods with no pickup at all marked in red. By the time he left in February 2005, he had achieved 70 percent coverage.

Chiarelli was involved in all aspects of Baghdad, both high and low. He could have been the mayor. "He took polls," says one admiring Pentagon official. So he knew, for instance, the level of satisfaction with the electricity service over time. No detail of municipal government was beneath his notice. "He knows where the sewage is gravity-fed, and where the s*** needs to be pumped," says the official. And like any good politician he worried about job creation.

Is all this odd for a general? Not in a counterinsurgency. "It is a different kind of fight," Chiarelli says. "It takes more than combat operations to win this fight. If you go after the large number of Iraqis sitting on the fence, you take away the disgruntled folks the insurgency preys on." You also get better intelligence, including via the five telephone tip lines Chiarelli set up.

The enemy recognized this dynamic too. In August 2004, the 1st Cavalry Division had managed to put 18,000 people to work in Sadr City. "The insurgents looked at that and said, 'We can't let them employ our people and fix the things we said they won't fix,'" Chiarelli says. A fight began in Sadr City. Chiarelli sought to win militarily, but also to drive a wedge between the population and Sadr's insurgents. The fight was concentrated in the north of Sadr City, so Chiarelli redoubled the infrastructure work in the south: "We let them in the north look at what was happening in the south. We wanted them to say, 'These guys who are fighting have stopped the improvement, all for what? To have IEDs in the streets?'"

U.S. Marine hands out candy, Ubbaydi, April 2004

ANDREW CUTRARO/KRT

Farther south, in Najaf, the coalition was confronting Sadr as well. Conditions were more favorable to routing him from the mosque in Najaf after the June handover. Interim prime minister Ayad Allawi and the defense minister were on board the operation, giving it Iraqi cover. And more Iraqi forces were available. They were the ones that operated in closest proximity to the mosque, in the alley right next to the shrine. Eventually, Grand Ayatollah Sistani brokered another deal, this one to remove Sadr's forces from the mosque entirely.

After Chiarelli beat Moqtada al-Sadr in Sadr City, he kept the focus on rebuilding and employment. The goal was to hire in the neighborhoods, and hire as many people as possible. "I was upset," he says, "when a contractor showed up with a [mechanized] ditch digger; I didn't want ditch diggers." He wanted to put shovels in peoples' hands for $5-7 a day. "We went from 160 attacks a week in August to under 10 attacks each week, at which point it gets hard to differentiate between crime and insurgent attacks," he says.

You could call Chiarelli's broad-based approach a kind of humanitarianism, but you also could call it force protection. "Where we did the infrastructure," he says, "we saw the bad guys move out." This made all the non-military tasks palatable to Chiarelli's troops: "Our guys understood, they were safer in the neighborhoods where their projects started. People say, 'You're doing work you shouldn't have to do.' Maybe they're right, but no one else could do it and we were getting shot at and there was no other way to stop the shooting."

'THEY LIVED, SLEPT WITH THE IRAQIS'

Ultimately, we wanted to hand all the security over to Iraqi forces, but we had a learning curve in training them as well. General Dempsey watched half of the National Guard and police he had trained walk away during Sadr's first revolt in April 2004. "Something that I frankly missed is that it is a patronage culture," Dempsey says. "For the last 3,500 years the sheik of the tribe is the person you go to to address your needs." The training of Iraqi forces lacked that kind of local, tribal legitimacy, even though it seemed to be going swimmingly.

"We were paying them ourselves, out of CERP. I was pinning purple hearts on them. They loved us, truly, honestly," Dempsey explains. But when it came time to confront Sadr's uprising, the calculation changed entirely. "They asked, 'Who is the Iraqi face who will empower me to take on fellow Iraqis?' No one. The culture is built on patronage. No patron, off they go."

Dempsey tried a different approach. He went to tribal leaders and to the political parties, and asked them to give him Iraqis for the military forces. These were people or bodies to whom the Iraqi recruits had a loyalty. "I would have loved to have had them have an allegiance to a nation called Iraq," Dempsey says. "But in 2004 there was no nation called Iraq."

Meanwhile, a broader reevaluation of the training program was underway. Rumsfeld had been dissatisfied with it as early as December 2003. He sent Maj. Gen. Karl Eikenberry to Iraq to review it and the general made a key recommendation in early 2004: that the training of Iraqi security forces, including the police, be consolidated under one commander.

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Initially, each division commander had responsibility for training in his area. The thought was that each region was different, and training should reflect that. That this would create varying standards wasn't a major concern, since there was an emphasis on pushing sheer numbers out the door to get forces onto the streets to deal with what were expected to be routine policing duties. "We realized as the insurgency unfolded that the training should be consolidated," says an administration official. The centralization would create a higher overall standard of quality.

So General Patreaus was put in charge of all training. The police needed more military-style preparation. "We had built it on a Western, police-force-in-a-democracy model," says a top officer in Iraq. The training now emphasizes survival skills, force protection, IED-detection, and the use of AK-47s. More emphasis has been placed on the training of units. "Individual police are important, but they can't stand up to insurgents," says the officer, who invokes as a model the special carabinieri units that took down the mafia in Sicily.

Training for the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, near Qayarray, May 2004

Police stations have been hardened and communications have been improved. "You never want to let the police think that no one is coming to the rescue," says someone who has monitored the Iraqi performance. "You never want the response to a call for help to be, 'Well, gosh, we have a lot going on ourselves, we'll be there in a few hours.' That's the proximate cause of the crumbling of the police in Mosul [in November]."

Although the military training was always pretty good, it too was toughened—"so we could find out who was suffering from tiny-heart syndrome," says an officer. Professionalism has increased. The Iraqi policy on absenteeism is now fairly stiff. "If someone is AWOL for seven days, they might as well not come back," says a top officer. In general, he says, "Iraqis discipline Iraqis far more effectively than we can."

The resources being poured into all this are massive: $1.9 billion. Since the June handover, 130,000 AK-47s have been acquired for the Iraqi military and police. And that's just the beginning of the build-up: 266 million rounds of ammunition; 122,000 pistols; 82,000 Kevlar helmets; 133,000 body-armor suits. The number of sets of body armor alone outstrips the size of the entire British Army by roughly 30,000.

Rumsfeld sent retired general Gary Luck to review the training again at the beginning of this year. Luck had a key insight: "It was clear the units that had been built," says an administration official, "could be used." Luck advocated a concept called "teaming and embedding." Each Iraqi battalion is teamed with an American battalion and mentored and encouraged. Initially, the Americans are in the lead, but over time that will shift so the Americans are only in a support role.

Also, within each Iraqi battalion is an embedded team of Americans. As one Pentagon official describes this practice, which some commanders had already been using in Iraq, "We built special-forces teams. They lived, slept, crapped with the Iraqis." The embedded Americans provide intense help in logistics, communications, and tactics—"it's a deeper level of training," says an administration official. They also are a connection to the teamed American battalion. A Pentagon official explains: "The Americans all have radios, and on the other end of those radios are artillery, close air support, and MedEvac."

The benefits of Iraqis' taking the lead security role go beyond lifting the burden from Americans and removing the political irritant of foreign troops. General Patreaus says of the Iraqi police and army units, "They have an ability to interrogate people very, very rapidly. They speak Arabic. They speak the dialect. They know the neighborhoods. If we did it, we would still be working with the translator and asking, 'Is that Mohammad with an "a" or Mohammed with an "e"?' The Iraqis will have already gotten the intelligence and be back in the pickup truck heading to the next target."

There are now 100 operational Iraqi combat battalions, with an average of 750 men each. In March, 6,000 former soldiers and new recruits completed basic training. The Americans involved in this growing training effort call it the "Mesopotamian Stampede." It's like an unruly cattle drive where the challenge is just to keep the herd moving, to keep the momentum going no matter what. "It's a drama. Every day there's something, whether it's ego management or some individual Iraqi soldier who is doing something. It's unbelievable," says an American close to the process. But the herd is growing, and moving ahead.

'YOU CAN'T STOP AND START'

By the end of 2004, the biggest blight on the U.S. counterinsurgency was Fallujah. "We knew the car bombers were coming on a rat line out of Fallujah into Baghdad," says an administration official. Every city in Iraq has a section devoted to garages. Fallujah had that, except many of the garages were putting together car bombs. "It had become a car-bomb factory within a 20-minute drive of West Baghdad," says an officer in Iraq. There were two insurgent broadcast studios in the city. "It was so far beyond the pale it wasn't funny," says the officer.

Marine Lt. Gen. Richard Natonski, commander of the 1st Marine Division that led the assault on the city, explains: "The insurgents used Fallujah as a sanctuary, an area where they could re-arm, rest, plan, and execute their attacks toward Baghdad or Ramadi. It was the equivalent of the U.S. having a

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military base in Iraq. The amount of arms and ordnance we pulled out of there was phenomenal, tons and tons."

In November 2004, with Iraqi officials in the interim government in place to explain and defend the coming assault and with more Iraqi forces on line, it was time to deal with it. "We worked the whole thing out with Allawi," says an administration official. "He and we prepared the ground. There could have been outrage in the Arab world. There wasn't. And the Iraqis were able to tolerate it."

Natonski too did his share of information work in the run-up to the assault: "We tried to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the people. We dropped leaflets and made broadcasts explaining how elsewhere we were rebuilding, and they were losing water treatment plants and millions in reconstruction funds."

There were probing attacks throughout the summer and early fall targeting the leadership around Zarqawi. The attacks also created a strategic ruse. "They thought we were coming from the south," says an administration official. "The Marines were camped in the south. The probing raids were deliberately from the south." So the insurgents oriented their defense toward the south. Instead, we came from the north.

Winning in Fallujah, November 2004

PATRICK BAZ/AFP

And came in force. "We learned the lesson from April that you just can't do it piecemeal. You can't stop and start, stop and start," says Natonski. Which doesn't mean the campaign was indiscriminate or immune to political considerations. For instance, we took the hospital first, which was used by the insurgents as a command-and-control center and to treat their wounded. "There were military reasons for that," says an administration official. "But it was also because the first time, in April, al-Jazeera was in that hospital saying that the Marines were murdering children."

About 2,000 Iraqi security forces were in the fight. "We used them in taking down sensitive sites," says Natonski. "The hospital was taken with Iraqi commando units in the lead. Several mosques and the government center were taken by the Iraqis." Iraqis had a particular nose for finding weapons caches and could immediately tell whether detainees were from a foreign country.

Six battalions of Marines and Army troops came slicing down from the north and kept on going. "The success of the attack," Natonski explains, "was based on speed. Tanks and Bradley vehicles penetrated quickly, to be followed by Marine infantry. The rapid penetration disrupted the enemy's command and control, a lot of it in the Jolan district [in the northeast corner of the city]." Weeks later U.S. troops found insurgents still holed up, awaiting orders that never came.

A favored insurgent tactic was using parked vehicles as bombs. They wanted to call on their cellphone to explode a car at the moment they saw it would do maximum damage. The speed of the U.S. assault disrupted that tactic, according to Natonski: "If you can either kill them or make them fall back, they can no longer see the vehicles they want to detonate."

The insurgents were fierce and determined. "We found a lot of drugs," says Natonski. "They looked to be amphetamines, maybe speed. We think many of them were hopped up on drugs." They also believed they were fighting a horrific foe: "The second- or third-order effect of Abu Ghraib is that many of the insurgents were brainwashed to think that that was the way they would be treated, so instead of surrender they fought to the death."

The performance of the U.S. forces was spectacular. Marines got shot and kept on fighting. When the battle ended, there was a rash of reports of previously ignored wounds. "Headquarters asked, 'Why are you reporting 35 wounded so late?'" says Natonski. "We were reporting them so late because these kids didn't report it when they were wounded. The Corpsmen bandaged themselves up and stayed in the fight. The Marines at Iwo Jima, Chosin Reservoir, and Vietnam set the bar pretty high, and they lived up to the standard."

'WE HAD TURNED THE CORNER'

With more and better Iraqi forces up and running, with the interim government having been established, and with the Najaf and Fallujah campaigns completed, the broad conditions were set for the elections. "The military strategy was to clean the place up before the elections," says an administration official. "Our strategy was to make sure that none of the country was off limits."

Natonski and others kept up the pressure. The idea was that being aggressive prior to the election would keep the insurgents off balance. "When you start attacking them, you throw them off their planning cycle," Natonski says. Washington was intent on holding to the January 30 election date. One Pentagon official explains, "If we'd slipped that deadline because of the security situation, we'd be saying, 'Look, we've lost the country.' It would have been a tremendous victory for the insurgents. January 30 was really a test of strength."

And of the Iraqi security forces. We identified 26 key cities by population and sought—mostly successfully—to have Iraqis in control of local security in them. It was important for Iraqis to see Iraqis taking responsibility. There were roughly 5,200 polling places around the country, protected by 130,000 Iraqis. They provided the security in the inner cordon, closest to the polling places, while Americans handled the outer rings. On Election Day, not one of the polling places was penetrated, and some were protected by the heroic acts of Iraqi security personnel who tackled suicide bombers.

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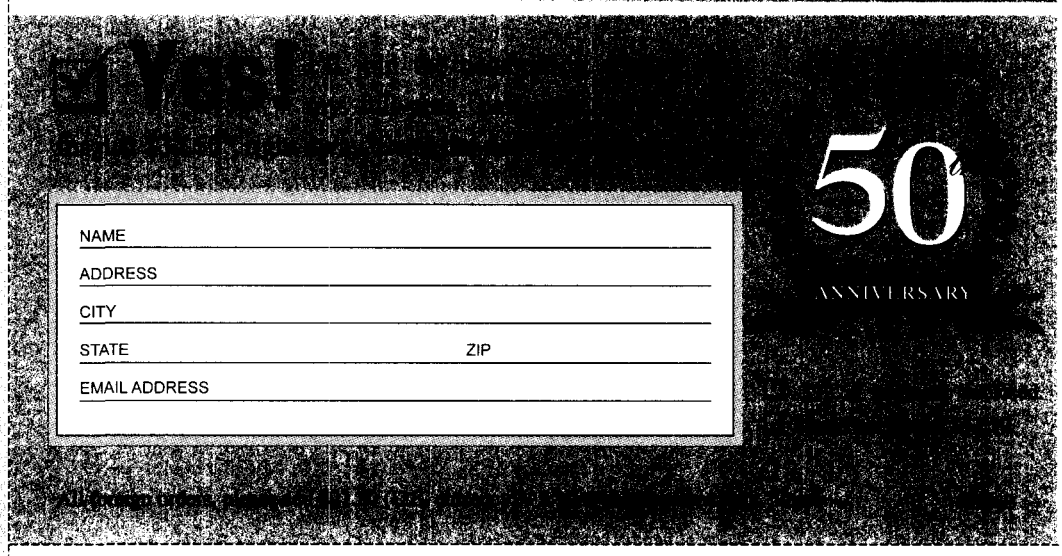

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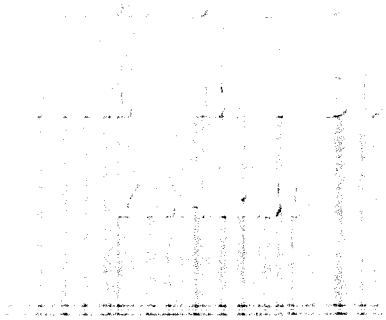

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It was a point to which we had been building for a long time. General Chiarelli describes the long-running civic work of his men with neighborhood and district councils as "a train-the-trainers program. It educated the Iraqis on the elections." Now it had all paid off in what was a transformative civic statement by ordinary Iraqis. Everyone knew there were death threats against people participating in the election. "That the Iraqis were willing to mark themselves as having voted," says Feith, "that showed not simply broad support for the elections, but amazing depth."

"After the fall of Fallujah and the elections, we had turned the corner," says Natonski. Chiarelli agrees: "We felt it afterwards, what it did to change the psyche of the people."

In Afghanistan, elections had produced a stirring turnout that gave the government a new boost of legitimacy, made a reassuring statement about U.S. intentions, and further isolated the insurgency politically. The Iraqi elections similarly were not only a step ahead in governance, but were a crucial piece of the information campaign against the insurgents—and therefore part of the security campaign as well. "We had all that in mind in the run-up to the Iraqi elections," says Feith, "hoping to see the same phenomenon as in Afghanistan. And we have. As different as Afghanistan and Iraq are, the parallels are striking, especially in the importance of the political process to security."

'TAKE THE HAND OFF THE BICYCLE SEAT'

None of this is to suggest, of course, that Iraq is paradisiacal. Building the Iraqi security forces will take more time. "An army is about leadership," says a Pentagon official. "It takes 20 years to make a lieutenant colonel who can command a battalion in the U.S. military." If American commanders have had success with small-scale reconstruction projects, the larger-scale effort to restore the country's oil and electricity is still stumbling. And there are insurgent attacks every day. "We never defeated the Sunni hardcore in the initial war," says an administration official. "That's the nut we haven't cracked yet."

Lining up to vote, Basra, January 2005

ANDREW PARSONS/EPA

Yet every major indicator in the counterinsurgency is heading in the right direction. If the infrastructure and economy leave much to be desired, they have improved over the immediate post-invasion conditions. Iraqi security forces are better. More intelligence is available, both from tips and because Iraqi forces—more attuned to local conditions—are in the fight. Sanctuaries for insurgents have been denied in Iraq's cities and a little progress has even been made with regard to Syria. ("The resources aren't flowing as freely from Syria anymore," an administration official explains. "The people who lead the insurgency are not as comfortable. They are not sleeping in the same places at night.") Finally, the political process is on track, even if stumbling blocks remain, and it's not clear whether the balance of Sunni fence-sitters will participate in it.

All of this is encouraging, especially if you have realistic expectations. "It's not the First World," says Dempsey. "It's not us, and if you measured it against us, you will always be dissatisfied." It's not as though Iraq had ever been Sweden, after all. One official notes that violent al-Anbar province has always been "a den of thieves." "There will probably be fighting there ten years from now," he says, "but it will be against Iraqis, not Americans."

If success in Iraq is not assured, it is within sight. This is a testament to the resolve of President Bush, the Pentagon's push to give more responsibility to the Iraqis, the imagination and flexibility of U.S. commanders, and—above all—the courage, the can-do willingness to take on any task, and the amazing capabilities of the American soldier and Marine.

The administration's strategic scheme for success has, since the invasion, seen us moving through stages, from liberation, to occupation, to partnership, to Iraqi self-reliance. Currently, we are in the second phase of the partnership stage, with an elected Iraqi government beginning to take on more responsibility. We could move into self-reliance at the end of the year or the beginning of next, when, if all goes as planned, Iraq will have a permanent constitution and a government elected under it, with its security forces presumably even better prepared than they are now.

As we move down that path, the number of U.S. troops will gradually diminish. There are no hard deadlines. An administration official calls it "a conditions-based strategy." "The longer we carry the burden," he says, "the more dependent the Iraqis will be. There is a judgment that the time to take the hand off the bicycle seat is now, after the elections." Slowly, there will be "a one-to-one replacement of American units with Iraqi units."

It is already happening. Iraqis are increasingly in the lead in the nine peaceful provinces in the south. The Kurds are providing security in the three provinces of Iraqi Kurdistan. "In 12 of 18 provinces of Iraq, by and large, Iraqi security forces are shouldering the work," says an officer in Iraq. The transfer has begun even in the more troublesome parts of Iraq. The 40th Brigade of the Iraqi Army now patrols the dangerous Haifa Street neighborhood in Baghdad. This is not the precipitous "exit strategy" demanded by the war's critics, but a way of achieving the war's ultimate goal—a legitimate, representative Iraqi government that can defend itself.

"We don't have an exit strategy," says deputy undersecretary of defense William Luti. "We have a strategy for victory. We're going to win." **NR**

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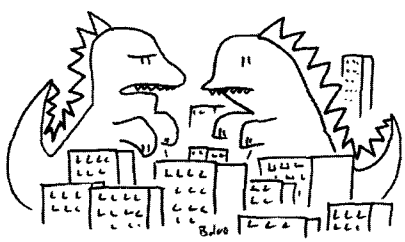
HELP!!!!

The Old Hillary

At Humphrey's bash she blew her stack,
Hurling the nearest bric-a-brac
While ripping off that rubber mask—
The smiling one. It was a task
She entered into with some joy,
And did they eat it up? Oh boy!
So so-long, powder-puffing Hill.
All cookie talk still makes her ill.

—W. H. von Dreele



"I've looked all over the place,
and I can't find any 'Sandwich Islands'!"

POLITICALLY CORRECT
By Jim Huber
HEY, BORDER PATROL? I'M FROM THE MINUTEMAN PROJECT AND I SPOTTED A PERSON TRYING TO GET INTO THE COUNTRY
AND A FEW TRYING TO GET OUT
LOOK
LOOK
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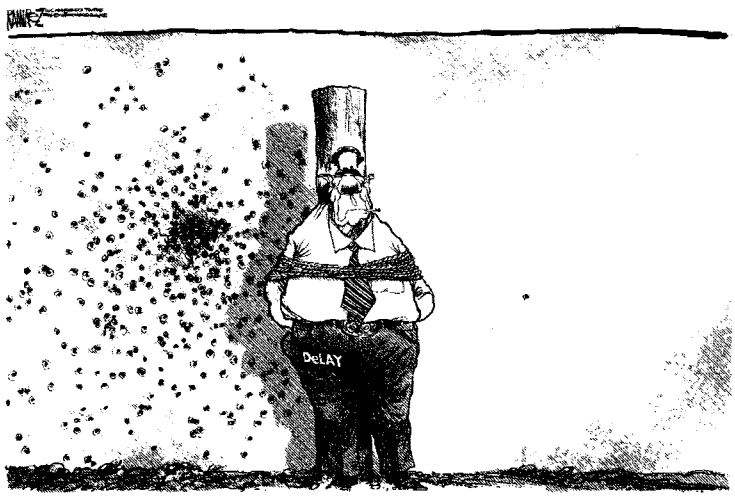

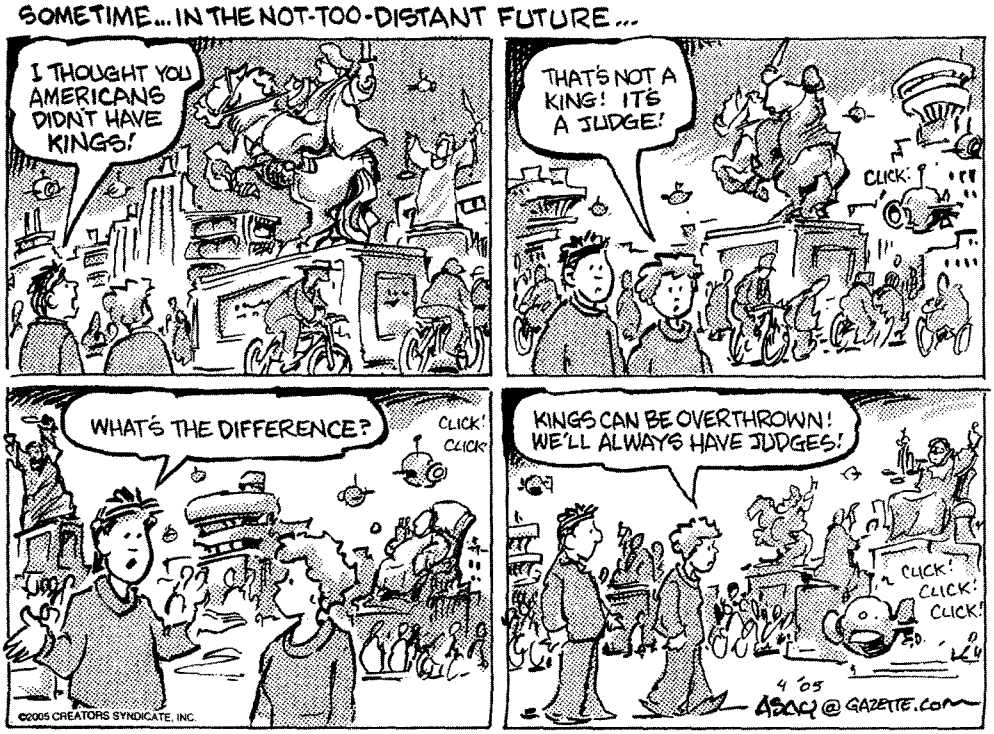

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the long view

ROB LONG

Larry King Live Transcript
May 27, 2005

LARRY KING: "From Houma, Louisiana! Is the caller there?"
CALLER: "Um . . . yeah, hi, Larry."
LARRY KING: "And do you have a question for Pope Benedict XVI?"
CALLER: "Oh. Is he on now?"
LARRY KING: "Caller, what's your question for the new pope?"
CALLER: "It was actually for the cast of *Eight Simple Rules*."
LARRY KING: "That was the last segment. Do you have a question for the Pope, newly elected Cardinal Ratzinger?"
CALLER: "Um . . . sure. Sure, I guess. Um . . . Your Holiness, I was wondering what you think you'll enjoy the most about being the Supreme Pontiff?"

LARRY KING: "Good question, Your Holiness. Can I call you that? I'm just a Jew from New York City. Will that be a thing?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "No, no, Larry. As you know, we of the Roman Catholic faith believe that your people have a special relationship with the Lord and—"
LARRY KING: "Chosen, right? We're chosen. Let me ask you something: Is it scary? One minute you're a guy in the red thing with the cap dealie, the next, white smoke, the robes, boom! You're a pope. What was going through your head?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Well, Larry, obviously one feels immensely humbled by the task that God has chosen for one."
LARRY KING: "The power?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "The responsibility. One prays to God, Larry, that He will give one the strength to be a wise Father of the Church."
LARRY KING: "So there's lots of prayer involved here?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "I beg your pardon?"
LARRY KING: "Tomorrow night! Celebrities and obesity! Sanjay Gupta and Kirstie Alley! She's courageous, don't you think, Your Holiness?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "I am not familiar with her."
LARRY KING: "From Schaumburg, Illinois! You're on with the new pope!"
CALLER: "Oh, hey, Larry. Hello, Your Holiness."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Hello, my child."
CALLER: "I was just wondering, Your Holiness, and I mean no offense, but why are you on the Larry King show?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Well, that's a wonderful question. I think it was something that I sensed, along with many of my advisers in the Vatican, that perhaps what I needed to do, as the newly elected leader of the Roman Catholic Church, was reach out to as many people as I can."
LARRY KING: "Sort of a 'hello dere' tour. I get that."
CALLER: "But why Larry King? Why not O'Reilly? I think his ratings are, like, ten times what—"
LARRY KING: "This weekend! The Gatlin Brothers and the Judd Sisters! Together! Pope, I'm going to say a few words to you, and I want your immediate response, okay? Don't think about it. Just say the first words that pop into your head. Ready?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Ready."
LARRY KING: "Abortion."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Wrong."
LARRY KING: "Divorce."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Wrong."
LARRY KING: "Gay marriage."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Wrong."
LARRY KING: "Euthanasia."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Wrong."
LARRY KING: "Lesbian adoptions."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Wrong."
LARRY KING: "Rap music."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "I am unfamiliar with that kind of music."
LARRY KING: "They don't play that every now and then in the Vatican?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "There's no shortage of beautiful music played in the Vatican, Larry."
LARRY KING: "Yeah, but . . ."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Is rap music that music filled with rhymes and half rhymes of sexual braggadocio and threats of violence?"
LARRY KING: "Exactly!"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Then it's wrong, too."
LARRY KING: "Your Holiness, is there a sense that the Church needs to loosen up a bit? Maybe take some of the things in the 'wrong' column and maybe move 'em over to the 'use caution while operating' column?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "No."
LARRY KING: "No sense at all?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "No."
LARRY KING: "It's just that, as a guy from Brooklyn, I gotta say, maybe the Church should relax a bit."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Relax a bit?"
LARRY KING: "Yeah. Maybe. Take the edge off some stuff."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "You think maybe we're too uptight?"
LARRY KING: "I'm just saying that as a guy who looks at ratings for a living."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "You feel that we should adjust the Church's ancient and holy beliefs to better suit today's fashions?"
LARRY KING: "Yeah."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "This from a guy who's been married, what, seven times?"
LARRY KING: "Six."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Call me a liar for getting it wrong."
LARRY KING: "Why do I feel that I'm about to get my knuckles rapped with a ruler?"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Because you are. Hands out, Mr. King."
LARRY KING: "But I'm Jewish!"
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "That's no excuse."
LARRY KING: "Used to be."
POPE BENEDICT XVI: "Hands out, Mr. King!"
LARRY KING: "Tuesday! The whole hour with the Gilmore Girls! Ow!"

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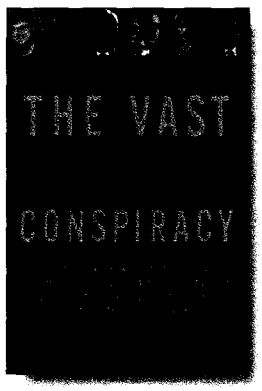


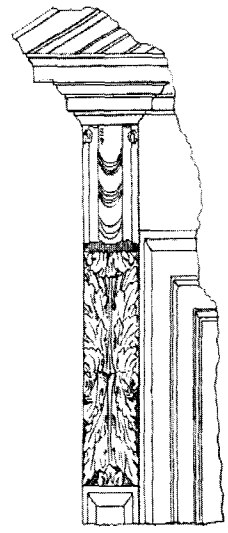
The Vast Left Wing Conspiracy: The Untold Story of How Democratic Operatives, Eccentric Billionaires, Liberal Activists, and Assorted Celebrities Tried to Bring Down a President—and Why They'll Try Even Harder Next Time,
by Byron York
(Crown Forum, 277 pp., $26.95)

MATTHEW CONTINETTI

BYRON YORK, of course, is NATIONAL REVIEW's White House correspondent, a fact that we—as citizens—should be grateful for, but which also presents challenges to the reviewer of his work herein—namely, me. Because if *The Vast Left Wing Conspiracy* (the title is ironic) were a dud, it would be embarrassing for everyone involved to expose it as such in these pages. When such a scenario occurs, the reviewer often contorts himself to navigate around a book's ragged edges, and to offer encouragement and praise. Fortunately I don't have such problems: York's book is a gem.

It's a gem because it eschews name-calling and sloganeering in favor of reporting and storytelling. And what a story—how, within two years, a group of Democratic operatives, allied with fringe elements of the Left, built an effective and durable fundraising machine that raised hundreds of millions of dollars, all outside the traditional Democratic-party structure. Those Democrats handed the cash to—you guessed it—other Democrats, who in turn used it to build various institutions devoted to unseating George W. Bush. Bush survived the onslaught, of course, but so did the Democrats. Today American political speech is littered with the names of their creations: MoveOn, America Coming Together, the Media Fund, the Center for American Progress, Air America. Toward the end of his book York argues, correctly, that we will be repeating such names for years to come.

The Democrats' feverish activity had two causes: one specific, the other general. The specific cause was President Bush. His twang, his malapropisms, his swagger, his pedigree, his cunning, his religion, but most of all his success had stirred up deep swells of hatred among liberals, who placed him in the pantheon of historical figures somewhere between Jefferson Davis and Idi Amin. Bush was the "most dangerous president ever," it was said, and therefore the 2004 presidential election was "the most important election of our lifetimes." Bush-hatred ran so deep, and proved so lucrative, that it prompted Democrats and lefties to act like their sworn enemies: Republicans.



Which brings us to the general cause. After their resounding defeat in the 2002 midterm elections it was fashionable among liberal Democrats to blame the party's shellacking on what one writer called the "Republican Noise Machine." When liberals looked at the political scene they saw a clique of Republican foundations—Scaife, Olin, Bradley—supporting conservative think tanks and publications, which employed a small band of scholars and writers whose work was read aloud on Rush Limbaugh's radio program and who appeared on Fox News accompanied by an army of soundbite-packing blondes. Thus the "radical, right-wing" politics of a few eccentric billionaires were transmitted to the American public, stoking the electorate's anger and rousing it to rebellion against "liberal elites." Naturally the liberal elites were terrified. But they were also fascinated, and, awed at the conservative movement's dazzling complexity and apparent success, saw in the eyes of Rush Limbaugh faint glimmerings of Democratic revival. The key to success, liberals argued, was to create a noise machine of their own. All they needed was a crazy billionaire.

Luckily one was on hand. The Hungarian-born George Soros is a billionaire many times over—his net worth is estimated at $7 billion—and, as with other billionaires, his politics are the result of never having had anyone disagree with him. Soros made his fortune as a commodities trader, which is to say he made his fortune devaluing foreign countries' currencies, in particular the Russian ruble and the British pound. Not so long ago he wreaked global economic havoc. But in the late 1990s he had a change of heart, disavowing capitalism in favor of philanthropy. His Open Society Institute campaigned for democracy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and for marijuana legalization and campaign-finance reform in the United States. The institute's grants to the Alliance for Better Campaigns, Common Cause, the Center for Public Integrity, New York University Law School's Brennan Center for Justice, and Public Campaign—by York's estimate, a total of $7 million—helped pass the McCain-Feingold act of 2002, which banned unlimited contributions to political parties and pledged to take big money

Mr. Continetti is a staff writer for *The Weekly Standard*.

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out of politics forever. Around the time that President Bush began his reelection campaign, however, Soros decided that big money in politics might be a good thing after all. He announced that the Open Society Institute would shift its resources from promoting democracy abroad to saving democracy at home—saving democracy, in other words, from George W. Bush.

The sums involved were enormous. To start, Soros donated $10 million to America Coming Together, a get-out-the-vote operation run by longtime Democratic activists, and another $2.5 million to antiwar MoveOn.org's fundraising arm. But this was only the beginning. By the end of the 2004 campaign, York writes, "Soros alone had given $20 million." Which may sound like a lot of money. Yet Soros's total contribution was less than a *sixth* of the $141 million America Coming Together raised in total, and about a third of the $60 million raised by the Media Fund, which made anti-Bush television ads. Who helped Soros raise such enormous sums? The insurance magnate Peter Lewis, for one; the Hollywood producer Steven Bing, for another. Each contributed over $10 million. But they were joined by others, like Massachusetts businessman Terry Ragon and heiress Linda Pritzker, who contributed $3 million each.

If Soros and company had a sense of irony they would have privately smiled when they wrote checks to unseat Bush, for they had just stopped writing checks to enact campaign-finance reform only months before. They were living examples of the law of unintended consequences; McCain-Feingold was the law, and they—the people pouring hundreds of millions into unregulated "527" groups—were its consequences. Although Bush won reelection in the end, the money liberals had spent to defeat him was a solid investment. For in the effort to reclaim the country from conservatives, they had discovered a strange and exotic new species of political animal: the liberal base.

"Base" is political jargon used to describe a politician's or party's core supporters—or at least it used to be jargon. Over the last few years politics has turned into a self-referential and darkly funny postmodern pageant, in which hobbyists quibble over such neologisms as "electability" and "message." "Base" has been mainstreamed along with those other terms, and "satisfying the base" has become a top priority for many politicians. "Base," however, also means "having or showing little or no honor, courage, or decency; mean; ignoble"—and the word in this sense certainly fits many of the political die-hards, who can be peevish and truculent, prone to conspiracies, quick to hate and slow to forgive. On the left, think Michael Moore. York introduces us to Mark Crispin Miller, a media-studies professor at New York University; Miller, too, is pretty sure that the Bush administration is secretly plotting the overthrow of the Constitution and the establishment of a theocracy, which makes him, in the eyes of fellow academics, a moderate.

Although Bush won reelection in the end, the money liberals had spent to defeat him was a solid investment: They had discovered the liberal base.

As York writes, the "Vast Left Wing Conspiracy" was tiny: "MoveOn was a 2.5 million member closed loop"; documentarian Robert Greenwald's films were "the cinematic version of an impassioned conversation among like-minded, true-blue, somewhat marginalized Democrats in San Francisco, Monterey, Los Angeles, and New York"; America Coming Together was "about squeezing just a little more juice out of a lemon that had been nearly squeezed dry in the past." Dimly I remember conversations last fall with Democratic strategists who said a Kerry victory was assured because the Democratic base was "the most energized it's ever been." Turns out they were half right; the base was indeed energized, and like an active chemical compound it bubbled, fizzed, gave off light and a lot of smoke. Little did the Democrats know that the compound was inert, that behind the smoke was nothing but a small group of obsessives, talking feistily but only to one another. **NR**

Captive Continent

Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis, by Bat Ye'or (Fairleigh Dickinson, 384 pp., $23.95)

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

TERRORIST attacks on the United States, and then the campaign in Iraq, brought out into the open the anti-Americanism in much of European public opinion. This came as a shock, but it should not have done so. For decades now, European leaders have been seeking ways to centralize and unite, with the aim of making their continent a power in the world to rival the U.S. Generally speaking, they have not tried to explain why this is a good idea, nor whether it is practical, but have simply proceeded on their chosen course with a strange mishmash of deception and self-deception.

The prejudices and assumptions feeding this anti-Americanism originate mostly in France, a country grievously suffering from a sense of political and cultural failure. For two centuries now French policymakers have spoken of France as "a Muslim power," that is to say one with a grand imperial design for

Mr. Pryce-Jones is a senior editor of NR, and the author of numerous books, including *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs.*

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incorporating the Arab world and its resources. Not even widespread violence and wars of liberation could stifle the persistence of this fantasy. Originally inspired by General de Gaulle and backed by every subsequent French president, a policy program known as the Euro-Arab Dialogue acquired formal shape as from 1973, with the purpose of fitting the Arabs into the new imperial design of Europe.

Virtually nobody has ever heard of this Euro-Arab Dialogue. With no recognizable public profile, behind the scenes it nevertheless is changing the relationship between Europe and the Arab world, and the relationship of both to the U.S. It is a classic example of the invisibility and lack of accountability that are the hallmarks of the European Union's method of proceeding. Bat Ye'or's contribution is to bring this Euro-Arab Dialogue and its consequences into the light of day.

Born in Cairo, she has made a special study of the social and legal inequality that Christians and Jews were obliged to accept in the old days under Muslim rule. Known as *dhimmi*, minorities had to acknowledge their inferiority in all respects, and this bred in them a subservience for which she has coined the word "dhimmitude." For her, the Euro-Arab Dialogue is the foundation of dhimmitude in a new setting.

Much of what she records looks like the routine of international meetings that keep diplomats immersed in tedious routines of their own design. There they go from Barcelona, to Lahore, to Naples and Hamburg and Venice. But out pour the resolutions, in pours the European taxpayer's money, and lo and behold, shoals of new organizations are spawned, a Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Cooperation, a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership program, a Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership, and so on, as in the reproductive process of the amoeba.

By definition, representatives of European democracies have a different standing from representatives of Arab tyrannies, and ought to have different values. Instead, they are determined to give the Arabs whatever they demand. In the face of such surrender, the Arabs—skillful negotiators—naturally raise their demands, and so are incorporating Europe into imperial designs of their own. Arabs must be allowed to immigrate into Europe with full and guaranteed rights, and they must be shown a tolerance that they would never consider granting any Europeans who immigrated into their countries. The figures are uncertain, but something on the order of 20 million Arabs are now in Europe, and whether they will integrate or choose Islamist separatism is an urgent question.

Separatism is in effect jihad, that is to say a contemporary version of the traditional Muslim conquest by war of the infidel, with subsequent dhimmitude as the other side of the coin. A main ingredient of European anti-Americanism stems from the determination of the U.S. to resist jihad, indeed to break it by all available means. In Bat Ye'or's view, Europeans are being pressured by their leaders into dhimmitude; their continent is being remade as Eurabia. That is the real purpose of the Euro-Arab Dialogue.

Dhimmitude, she writes, is based on "peaceful surrender, subjection, tribute and praise." Signs of all this are everywhere present. European statesmen and intellectuals line up to assert that Western civilization stems from Islam and its learning, ignoring or deprecating the Judeo-Christian heritage and the contributions of Greece and Rome. "Europe's roots are as much Muslim as Christian," was the bizarre assertion of Jacques Chirac, an apostle of dhimmitude. Muslims claim Abraham as a prophet, and churchmen accept this nonsensical distortion of chronology and Judaism. The Muslim occupation of Spain, known as al-Andalus at the time, was an occupation like any other, but academics and publications pretend that it was a golden period of multicultural togetherness.

All the evidence is that Arabs are their own worst enemies, mired in tyranny, corruption, falsehood, and prejudice against women and infidels, but either as a cover or out of ignorance they insist that Israel is the sole obstacle to their peace and prosperity. Inspired by France, and by means of the European Union and offshoots of the Euro-Arab Dialogue, the Europeans have steadily promoted the Arab goal of delegitimizing Israel, and dismantling it; they rescued Yasser Arafat from the disastrous consequences of his one-man rule, and have paid about half the running costs of his regime, terrorism included. Arabs in Europe and their supporters accordingly are encouraged to attack Jews; and Thirties-style anti-Semitism is everywhere on the rise.

What really motivates this abject performance? Bat Ye'or points to various factors: greed and the necessity of Middle East oil; an unwritten compact that accepting millions of Muslims in their midst will spare Europeans from being victims of Islamist terror; a guilty conscience spurred by awareness that American support for Israel, particularly its moral support, is only just and right. All things considered, however, the inescapable conclusion is that those who speak and act in the name of Europe no longer believe in the cultural and moral values of their inheritance.

Ordinary people who are still in the dark about the way the Euro-Arab Dialogue is refashioning their lives may one day rebel—in which case, Bat Ye'or and this book will seem prophetic. Or they may sink helplessly into dhimmitude, in which case Bat Ye'or will be ignored and her book unobtainable. Either way, she is a Cassandra, a brave and far-sighted spirit. **NR**

SEEING RED

The brown grass of the dead season
Wavers, scattered and lighter at
The edges of the field, where it
Mingles with withered honeysuckle,
Wild blackberry, and thin saplings,
Mostly poplar, maple, and oak.
In the brief afternoon, this tangle
Of underbrush at the perimeter
Seems just a darker shade of brown.
Through the night lies no other choice.
But as the icy mist of morning
Lifts, the hue turns red, distinct
From the grass, brighter than anything
Of the field or forest to which it leads.

—WILLIAM W. RUNYEON

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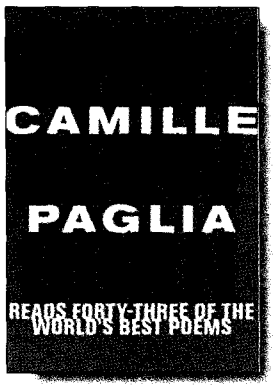
A Turn for The Verse



Break, Blow, Burn: Camille Paglia Reads Forty-Three of the World's Best Poems, by Camille Paglia (Pantheon, 272 pp., $20)

SARAH BRAMWELL

In the ongoing cultural catastrophe, without doubt poetry has suffered the most. While our museums sometimes feel like Penn Station at rush hour, our concert halls are packed with geezers, Oprah Winfrey makes best-sellers out of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *East of Eden*, and new buildings can turn architects into international celebrities, poetry alone has succumbed to oblivion. At mid-century, T. S. Eliot filled the football stadium at the University of Minnesota; today, few college students could tell you who T. S. Eliot was. Oh, what a falling off was there!

What accounts for poetry's loss of prestige? Camille Paglia thinks she knows: Owing to the life-sucking influence of sophistic "literary theory," poets no longer speak the American vernacular. Today's poetry is "stale" and "derivative," and today's poets inhabit a self-referential, cliquish universe. Literature professors, meanwhile, no longer know how to read and teach verse. They pride themselves on being able, as they like to put it, to "problematize" the text, but poetry is polysemous by nature—that is, it already has multiple meanings and invites the reader to explore its ambiguities. Academics no longer have any use for poetry, and it is consigned to the basement of culture—where the great poems sit, unexplored, unexplained, and unappreciated.

In the hands of a skilled and intelligent critic, however, poetry may become exciting again. As if to prove the point, Camille Paglia, the consummate *enfant terrible*, has written *Break, Blow, Burn*.

Probably nobody in America actually agrees with Paglia about anything. Her contempt for banal left-wing pieties on questions of sex and race, and her admiration of Western civilization, have incensed the Left, but her fancy for all things pagan and transgressive (including, she proclaims with impressive consistency, pop culture) makes cultural conservatives queasy. She may want to save Western culture, but only by showing how much more dangerous and subversive it is than anything that can pretend to displace it.

Her latest work—a collection of 43 poems with brief accompanying critical essays—is vintage Paglia: bracing, opinionated, and deliciously enjoyable. In her hands, poetry has the seductive scent of forbidden fruit. As she has before, she adverts often to themes of human sexuality, domination, and homoeroticism (though she can display a surprising and warm appreciation for the charming devotional verse of a George Herbert). But even as she delights in making poetry appear subversive, Paglia aims self-consciously at a middlebrow audience. For all its intellectual derring-do, her book hopes to bring back the day when ordinary people read and understood poetry. Perhaps she is less transgressive than we—or she—thought.

Pithy and persuasive, her close readings both illuminate the texts and teach us, by example, *how* to read them. She offers fresh readings of old favorites—Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," Wordsworth's "The World Is Too Much with Us"—and introduces lesser-known 20th-century works from the likes of Gary Snyder, Wanda Coleman, and Norman H. Russell.

I particularly enjoyed her discussion of John Donne's "Holy Sonnet I," in which the poet demands and receives the attention and saving power of God ("Thou hast made me, and shall thy worke decay?" rings out the first line). Death approaches, and the poet's sins weigh heavily:

> Despaire behind, and death before doth cast
> Such terror, and my feeble flesh doth waste
> By sinne in it, which it t'wards hell doth weigh;

"Weigh," explains Paglia, marks the poem's nadir. Through the heavy, sinking vowel, the reader experiences the downward pull of hell. But God does not abandon this sinner; redemption is nigh:

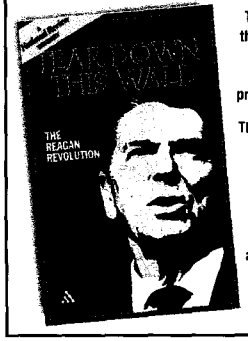
> Onely thou art above, and when towards thee
> By thy leave I can looke, I rise againe . . .
> Thy Grace may wing me to prevent his [Satan's] art,
> And thou like Adamant draw mine iron heart.

Paglia writes: "The sonnet's allegorical climax is cinematic, like the windswept episodes of Dante's *Inferno*. The faltering soul is snatched in midair by the dove with beating wings. . . . Sonnet's end is the finality of salvation, when time stops and eternity begins. . . . The poet's impure heart, having shed its envelope of 'feeble flesh,' is drawn toward God's adamantine touch, which turns iron into spiritual gold."

She is an ingenious interpreter of Donne. Drawing back from the minute details of the sonnet, she shows how the poem as a whole forms a "cruciform emblem": "The earthly horizontal—Donne's path from yesterday's fleshpots

Sarah Bramwell is a freelance writer living in New York.

NR on RR



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to tomorrow's tomb—is crossed by the embattled vertical extending from heaven to hell."

Like all the best critics, Paglia mixes measured assessments with bold critical sallies. Of Yeats's "Leda and the Swan," she writes, "Because of its vast historical vision and agonizing pantomime of passion and conflict, [it] can justifiably be considered the greatest poem of the 20th century." Perhaps you would nominate another for "greatest of the 20th century," but Paglia makes a compelling case. In her view, Yeats elevated the widespread disillusionment of artists and intellectuals following World War I to cosmic proportions: "Neither Zeus nor Leda is named in the text itself, so that the scene becomes archetypal: The poem records a pivotal moment of contact between humanity and divinity." Indeed, Yeats's line, "Agamemnon dead," foretells the very cultural catastrophe that Paglia and others hope to prevent: When, as today, educated people don't even know the names of dead Greeks like Agamemnon, Western civilization may already have died.

Even as she makes the occasional sweeping judgment, Paglia never overwhelms the poems with her presence. Her voice, though strong, defers always to the works themselves, which is exactly what one would expect from someone who wants to revive the New Criticism. In the 1930s, New Critics such as Cleanth Brooks, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren began to look at the poem as an autonomous artifact, explicable on its own terms, without reference to the author's background and psychology. Though neither Paglia nor the New Critics ignore historical context entirely, they rightly focus on the poem's formal elements. Paglia's criticism stands out as an example of the coherence and promise of this literary tradition.

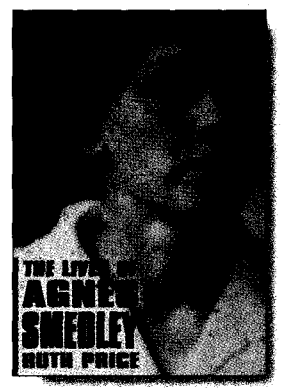
Of course, you may not agree with Paglia that Rochelle Kraut's "My Makeup" is *really* one of the "world's best poems," as the subtitle of Paglia's book promises. And perhaps you, like me, are not as enamored of Emily Dickinson as Paglia is, or can't stand much of what Walt Whitman wrote. (Thankfully, Paglia spares us the conventional wisdom that Whitman created a uniquely American voice. On the contrary, most Americans, if they took the time to think about it, would regard him as an insufferable egomaniac, and, if he ever showed up, would ride him out of town on a rail.) Whatever one's tastes, however, Paglia's provocations are always good fun.

Yet Paglia is also a woman on a mission. She swims against strong academic currents, and nothing less than the survival of the humanities is at stake. "Custodianship, not deconstruction, should be the mission and goal of the humanities," avers Paglia in the preface. But she pursues a further aim, beyond tidying up and dusting off the scattered mess of objects that postmodernism has left of English poetry: "As a student of ancient empires, I am uncertain about whether the West's chaotic personalism can prevail against the totalizing creeds that menace it. Hence it is critical that we reinforce the spiritual values of Western art, however we define them." Call *Break, Blow, Burn* Paglia's contribution to the War on Terror.

One needn't worry when the first "poetry" she quotes, a few pages in, is a 1950s jingle for Peanut M&Ms. There isn't beauty, or poetry, in all things, but those who—like Paglia—love the English language and seek it out wherever it is used with verve will find it from time to time under the bushel of popular culture. (In a similar vein, the Irish poet Seamus Heaney has praised the "verbal energy" of rap star Eminem's lyrics.) Thoughtful conservatives ought not to ignore popular culture entirely, lest they—like the contemporary poets Paglia excoriates—lose hold of the American vernacular and fall into stale and derivative thinking.

Paglia achieves great things in this small volume, but she leaves us hungering for more poetry and more criticism—Where, oh where, are Keats and Pope? one finds oneself demanding. Perhaps Paglia has a sequel in the works; perhaps she has made enough of a demonstration in this volume to inspire even the most poetry-averse. In either case, she has done culture a great service. **NR**

A Spy, Indeed



The Lives of Agnes Smedley,
by Ruth Price
(Oxford, 498 pp., $35)

RONALD RADOSH

Now almost forgotten, the journalist and activist Agnes Smedley (1892-1950) was a member of the pantheon of early-20th-century American radicals and feminists. Along with her friends Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger, Smedley was in the front ranks of those promoting birth control and women's rights, but she is best known for her activism in behalf of the Chinese Communist cause. Her 1929 autobiographical novel, *Daughter of Earth,* became popular again in the 1970s, when the women's-history movement was getting under way.

The author of this new and thorough biography of Smedley, Ruth Price, has been investigating her subject for 15 years. Using new sources obtained in archives in Russia, China, Britain, and America, Price reveals that Smedley was quite different from "the invincible rebel of [my initial] romantic imaginings." In Smedley's novel, she described herself as the dirt-poor daughter of a Colorado coal miner. In truth, her father was a ne'er-do-

Mr. Radosh, adjunct senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, is co-author of the forthcoming *Red Star Over Hollywood: The Film Colony's Long Romance with the Left.*

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well who—as deputy sheriff—brutalized the miners. Far from poverty-stricken, her family was raised to the middle class by her father's work for the detested coal companies. (The family lost its money later, after her father descended into alcoholism.) Agnes Smedley moved to Berkeley, Calif., where she engaged in anti-colonialist activism with the revolutionary wing of India's nationalist movement. She moved to New York in 1917, and worked for a time with Margaret Sanger on birth control; then left for Germany in 1920. She went on to China as a journalist in 1928, eventually living in the caves of Yenan—where she befriended Mao Tse-tung—and traveling with the Red Army.

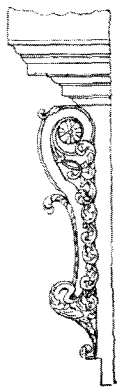
Smedley may have been, in Price's words, a "rebel in the largest and finest sense of the word," but she also was precisely what her most fervent enemies accused her of being: a Soviet spy. Price writes that the Left all along has viewed Smedley as an "unblemished heroine, the tragic victim of a McCarthyite smear." Indeed, Price herself started her book certain that the charges were false, and emanated from people who were scared of Smedley's "unbroken, independent spirit"; to Price, Smedley was an admirable figure, one to be resurrected as an inspiration for today's left-wing feminist movement. But being honest, and having carried out prodigious and unsparing research, Price found, "against [her own] wishes," that she had "succeeded in proving what [Smedley's] worst enemies failed to accomplish in half a century of trying": that Smedley was a major Soviet spy, a "master of deception, a skillful poseur" who got naïfs to defend her as an "innocent victim of wartime hysteria."

Naturally, Price found that her "colleagues on the left wanted nothing to do with [this] discovery," namely, that "a martyr of the McCarthy era" had "actually engaged in espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union." The taboo against admitting the truth survived the end of the Cold War. It is to Price's lasting credit that while she identifies herself as a woman of the Left, she stands by the truth instead of seeking to bend it to fit a preconceived ideology.

The story Price tells is compelling. Smedley's abusive relationship in Berlin with her lover, the Indian revolutionary Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, sent her into deep fits of depression, and psychosomatic medical conditions that completely immobilized her. In despair about her health and sanity, she left Berlin in 1928 for China, where she hoped to continue her work against world imperialism and for the revolution being advocated by Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang nationalists, a cause that had gained the support of Moscow.

In Shanghai, most of Smedley's work was actually undertaken in behalf of the Soviet state and its security apparatus. She acted as a mail drop and liaison, and used her home for secret meetings—not to advance the world revolution, but, as Price explains, to "aid the military intelligence operations of Stalin's government." Smedley was Soviet spy Richard Sorge's chief recruiting agent: "Her home served as a site for his group's nocturnal gatherings, and she provided Sorge with data on American political and economic activities in China." Smedley looked the other way at the growing repression in the USSR, showing only gratitude at what she saw as Moscow's commitment to China's liberation. Moscow, Smedley said, was now her "beloved city . . . the grandest, most inspiring place on earth."

As China moved toward war with Japan, Smedley sought to gain entrée to the areas of China controlled by Mao and the Red Army, eventually gaining access to Mao's base camp at Yenan, where she was wined and dined by the Communist leaders as a friendly Western journalist. Smedley enchanted and then scandalized the Chinese leadership, to whom she taught Western dancing (the fox trot) and her own belief in sexual liberation. Her activities evoked jealousy and antagonism among many of the puritanical Red military leaders and their wives. While in China, she asked Margaret Sanger to send her birth-control devices for both men and women, to combat what she felt was a sexually repressed environment. This was apparently the last straw; she was asked to leave Yenan.



Smedley explained to an old friend that she used her "typewriter as a machine gun"—and that she wished she could use the real thing. She accompanied the Eighth Route Red Army troops on their expeditions and reported on their bravery and sacrifices. She herself was jobless and destitute: Christopher Isherwood and W. H. Auden wrote, after meeting with her at Eighth Route Headquarters, that she bore "all the suffering, all the injustice of the world" by herself, to the point that she was continually inconsolable. After reading Price's book, no one would dispute that Agnes Smedley was selfless, inspired by and dedicated to the cause of the Chinese Red Army and its goal of a Communist China. What one does question, however, is whether Smedley's sincerity excuses her vast blind spots.

Returning to the U.S. in 1941, Smedley devoted the rest of her years to gathering support from her American countrymen for the Chinese struggle. In 1949, General MacArthur and others accused her of being a Soviet spy, a charge she vehemently denied. Smedley had a unique capacity to escape the net closing in around her, and to gain the support of honest advocates of civil liberties, who vouched for her and whose word served to convince others of her innocence. Her defense committee included such luminaries as Pearl Buck, John Hersey, John K. Fairbank, and Harrison Salisbury.

She thought of herself as a Jeffersonian true to her own native land's revolutionary tradition; yet she willingly served both Stalin's secret police and Mao's Red Army. A final judgment from her old friend Katherine Anne Porter rings true. Porter loved Smedley but thought her "a lamentable dupe of the kind our generation and place produced in extraordinary numbers." In the countries she "adores so," Porter wrote—referring to Soviet Russia and the Soviet zones created by Mao in China—"she would have been sent to a labor camp or put to death if a man corresponding in power to General MacArthur had accused her of treason."

Nevertheless, Ruth Price sees Smedley's work as having "enduring value," her writings as providing "a message of hope and optimism that still lifts our spirits." It is owing to the strength and brilliance of Price's rivetingly well-written book that one can disagree with her conclusion and her desire to depict Smedley as a heroine, and still recommend her work as a moving and genuinely dramatic biographical portrait. **NR**

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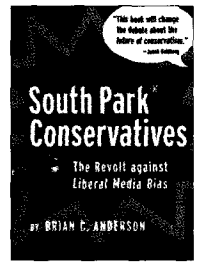
■ SHELF LIFE ■

The Liberals Killed Kenny!

MICHAEL POTEMRA

"I HATE conservatives," says *South Park* co-creator Matt Stone, "but I really f****** hate liberals." Some conservatives—those of us who are a little older, perhaps, and remember when liberals ran absolutely *everything*, from law and government to the media and the overall culture—are grateful for comments like this one, because they demonstrate just how far into the mainstream conservatism has progressed. The irreverent libertarianism of TV's *South Park* mocks left-wing shibboleths, as with the following ditty: "There's a place called the rain forest that truly sucks a**. / Let's knock it all down and get rid of it fast. . . . / You only fight these causes 'cause caring sells. / All you activists can go f*** yourselves." This is conservatism as insurgent counterculture, a movement showing exactly the same kind of cheeky spunk that gave Sixties liberals their cultural advantage back in the day; that this energy is now on the right speaks volumes about the political transformation of the U.S. in recent years.

In his breezy new book, ***South Park Conservatives: The Revolt against Liberal Media Bias*** (Regnery, 191 pp., $24.95), *City Journal* senior editor Brian C. Anderson uses the *South Park* phenomenon as metaphor for a broader cultural movement away from the stifling old liberal orthodoxies. (He credits blogger Andrew Sullivan with coining the phrase "South Park Republicans," to describe Americans who are hawkish on foreign policy and "extremely skeptical of political correctness" but also have social-liberal leanings.) In the new-media world—the blogosphere, right-wing talk radio, Fox News, and so on—conservatism is finally getting a fair hearing, and is winning the battle for the American mind. Writes Anderson: "Liberals yearn for the good old days when everybody who didn't read *National Review* had to get his news and analysis from 'unbiased' old-media sources like CBS and the *New York Times* and conservative arguments could be dismissed with an insult or, better still, simply ignored." Those days are over. While it would be an overstatement to say conservatives have *won* the culture war, it is undeniable that—in Anderson's words—"the Right is no longer losing."



■ Anyone looking for a splendid novel that grapples seriously with religious ideas would do well to seek out ***Sophia House*** (Ignatius, 488 pp., $24.95), by Michael D. O'Brien. The plot is deceptively simple: A heroic Polish bookseller hides a young Jew from the Nazis while wrestling with his own sexual cravings. But the book's themes are broad, gripping, and intelligently handled; O'Brien's concern is nothing less than the meaning of love, sin, fatherhood, and redemption, and his eschatological vision is compelling.

In the course of their long (and consistently fascinating) conversations, Pawel, the bookseller, explains to David, his young charge, the Christian understanding of Christ's Incarnation. "He came among us," says Pawel, "to teach us that we are greater than we conceive ourselves to be. Each person is his icon. To burn even one, to hurt even the least of human beings, is to assault God. He shows us his face, and to our shock it is a human face." This idea is made real in the book's narrative, and especially in its remarkable final chapter. During the novel's dénouement, Pawel reflects: "Had not every father once been a child, each suffering in turn those blows and absences that chained all souls, link by link, back into the shadows of time? What, then, would break the link? What would turn a man's vision from the dictates of the past toward the future?"

The answer is: only the irruption of pure divine grace into the fallen world. Another character explains early in the book: "We wish to be *worthy* of being saved . . . which is another way of saying that we, every one of us, whether we know it or not, wish to be our own god, that is, to save ourselves. We want paradise without his Cross, forgetting that the Cross is the only way to reenter the original harmony we lost in the Fall of Man. *This* is the narrow gate." (A concise and engaging explanation of the doctrine of justification by faith.)

To quote more from the book would be to risk convincing potential readers that it's merely a religious tract dressed up as fiction. Rest assured: *Sophia House* works as a thriller—a human drama—as well as a novel of ideas. It's actually a prequel to an earlier O'Brien novel, the 1996 *Father Elijah: An Apocalypse* (Ignatius, 597 pp., $14.95), which is one of the most suspenseful books I have ever read. The subject of *Father Elijah* is the End Times; readers of the multi-million-selling *Left Behind* series might be interested to see that subject discussed from a Roman Catholic perspective, and others will enjoy the book as a thriller on the same high level as *Sophia House*.

■ Those inclined to romanticize a past Golden Age of journalism would do well to read Laurel Leff's new book, ***Buried by The Times: The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper*** (Cambridge, 426 pp., $29). Leff is a former reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Miami Herald*, now on the faculty at Northeastern University; her book is a realistic account of how bias is always capable of subverting the telling of important stories. In the 1940s, the *New York Times* consistently downplayed what hindsight would judge to be a crucial story of the 20th century. "The *Times*'s first story on the Nazi extermination campaign [against the Jews], which described it as 'the greatest mass slaughter in history,' appeared on page five," writes Leff, "yet the deaths of other civilians, often fewer than 100, regularly appeared on the front page." Why? One reason was the assimilationist strivings of *Times* publisher Arthur Hays Sulzberger. Faced with an America just starting to emerge from a culture of iso-

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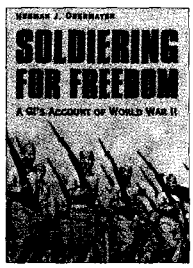
lationism and overt anti-Semitism, Sulzberger did not want his paper to appear to be engaged in special pleading for his ethnic and religious group; if such a perception had taken hold, public support for the war against Hitler might have eroded. Could better news coverage in America's greatest daily have saved the Jews? The short answer is no. But the paper was guilty, nonetheless, of a dereliction of its duty to the truth. Leff's cautionary tale is a detailed and sensible work of media criticism.

■ James Hitchcock, renowned lay theologian and history professor at St. Louis University, has written a definitive two-volume work on ***The Supreme Court and Religion in American Life*** (Princeton). In *Volume I: The Odyssey of the Religion Clauses* (232 pp., $29.95) and *Volume II: From "Higher Law" to "Sectarian Scruples"* (272 pp., $35), Hitchcock traces the highly unusual path of U.S. jurisprudence toward the current separationist understanding of church-state relations. Princeton is hereby encouraged to get a less expensive one-volume paperback edition of this work into bookstores—and law-school classrooms—as soon as possible.

■ That theocracies do exist—and must be resisted by U.S. foreign policy—is ably demonstrated in the anthology ***Radical Islam's Rules: The Worldwide Spread of Extreme* Shari'a *Law*** (Rowman & Littlefield, 226 pp., $27.95). Edited by Paul Marshall, a senior fellow at Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom, the book includes ten essays describing how radical Muslims—including the Wahhabists of Saudi Arabia—have fostered the rise of religion-based oppression worldwide. One of the volume's contributors, Stephen Schwartz, points out that the legal system favored by today's Muslim extremists is "not traditional" but radical: "It is not based on *shari'a* as understood during more than 1,000 years of Islamic jurisprudence but on a crude and ultrasimplistic interpretation that rejects the *shari'a* embodied in the four established Sunni legal schools." A harbinger of a better future—pointed out by Center for Religious Freedom director Nina Shea in her concluding essay—is the last-minute inclusion of protections of religious freedom in the new Iraqi constitution.



■ Daily life in the wartime U.S. Army is the subject of the invigorating new book ***Soldiering for Freedom: A GI's Account of World War II*** (Texas A&M, 324 pp., $32.95), by longtime newspaperman Herman J. Obermayer. The book consists largely of the young Obermayer's letters home from the Army in Europe during and after its liberation by the Allies. He is unsparing, and unsentimental, in the period detail he provides. For example, one interfaith service for the soldiers—with a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister, and a rabbi—didn't work out quite as planned: "Every time Rabbi Levy mentioned God or our Lord, I heard a man behind me say, 'Who are they to talk about God when they drove the spikes?'" Obermayer's book is an interesting account of life in liberated Paris and occupied Germany, including an eyewitness report on some of the historic legal proceedings at Nuremberg.

■ Shalem Press, of New York and Jerusalem, is to be commended for reissuing the late Aaron Wildavsky's 1984 classic ***Moses as Political Leader*** (304 pp., $16.95). Wildavsky used all his skill as a political scientist to try to understand the Scriptural narrative of the founding of the nation of Israel—in which Moses exercised political leadership as a "nursing father" who helped his people grow from their condition of slavery to more mature forms of governance.

■ It's hard to believe that the feisty Rebecca Hagelin has been married for 20 years. But the Heritage Foundation vice president—and mother of three—is indeed a frontline veteran of the child-rearing struggles of the past two decades, and she gives us the benefit of her experience in the new book ***Home Invasion: Protecting Your Family in a Culture That's Gone Stark Raving Mad*** (Nelson Current, 266 pp., $22.99). She makes a passionate and moving case for the family as a school of faith and virtue, a place where the next generation becomes prepared for the task of confronting—and changing—the culture.

■ In 1936, *New Republic* columnist John T. Flynn endorsed Socialist Norman Thomas for president; he subsequently joined the isolationist America First movement, became a fervent Joe McCarthy supporter, and—long after his death in 1964—was hailed as an all-time hero by the ultra-right-wing John Birch Society. In ***Right Turn: John T. Flynn and the Transformation of American Liberalism*** (New York University, 277 pp., $45), Ashland University history professor John E. Moser makes the case that Flynn remained, throughout his remarkable ideological peregrinations, "more or less consistently faithful to a set of core principles": "a basic faith in existing institutions (namely, democratic capitalism), tempered by a belief in the efficacy of government action (particularly at the federal level) to deal with the abuses that frequently crept into these institutions." Moser's book is a sympathetic portrait of a once prominent—but now virtually unknown—20th-century journalist. **NR**

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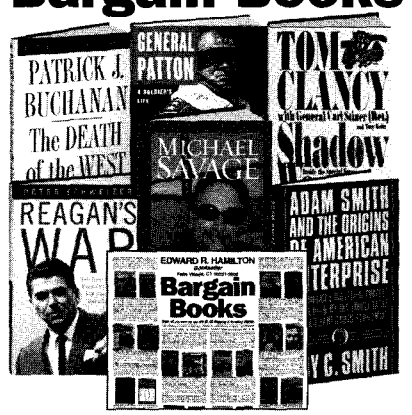

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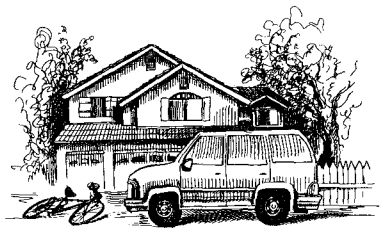
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

Fountains And Stuff



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

I HAVE an uneasy relationship with Washington, D.C. The monumental parts are wonderful, as good as anything on earth in that line. Not only are the monuments splendid in themselves, but they are very well laid out, all in a space that is nicely encompassed by a day's leisurely strolling, and with, as an 18th-century observer would have said, many noble prospects to please the eye. If you care about history and culture, there are always fascinating events to attend in the capital—exhibitions, lectures, debates. The city's museums are in decline, soft brown spots of P.C. corruption spreading over them, but still worth a visit with the kids if you know what to avoid.

Towards the rest, I mainly nurse doubts and suspicions. The city government is of course a disgrace, and has been for decades. Since this is our capital, that ought to be a *national* disgrace, though it mostly goes unmentioned, for reasons not terribly hard to figure out. Then there are those endless plush suburbs we drive through to get to the monuments—what an innumerable host of people are living so very well on government work! And when you get to the downtown area, with all the huge grand office buildings boasting Department of This and Department of That—what on earth are those myriads of worker-bees inside them busy at? Nothing much, is my suspicion. From time to time, at home in New York, I meet one or another of my journalist colleagues stationed in the capital and intimate with its inner workings. What, I ask him or her, is my government doing about such and such a thing? More often than not the response is a knowing smile, a shake of the head, and an assertion to the effect that nobody in Washington actually *does* anything about anything. They just play at status games and fight turf wars.

But then, of course, there are the cherry blossoms. So here we are on the second weekend in April, Mr. and Mrs. Straggler with kids visiting Our Nation's Capital (as I am careful to keep saying, for the kids' benefit), strolling around the Tidal Basin under the trees, looking across the water to the Jefferson Memorial, a warm and cloudless sky up above. This is the real purpose of Washington, D.C., one feels, the true reason the place is here: to give citizens an occasion for a weekend vacation, improving for the kids' minds and restful for our own eyes.

Several thousand other people are here with us, enjoying the blossoms and the springtime air. That's perfectly okay. My normal aversion to crowds is inoperative this beautiful day, by the water, under the blossoms. I find myself smiling at people. The junior Stragglers, on the other hand, are having difficulty seeing the point. Can they have ice creams? Ride a pedal boat? Touch the moon rock (i.e., at the Air and Space Museum)? It's just *blossoms*. What's the big *deal*? We have them back *home*. At what age, I wonder, do the small pleasures of a pretty scene, spiced with a dash of history and national pride, make themselves known?

I am curious to see the newer memorials, the ones for WWII and FDR. We head over to the first. It has been very nicely done, and is more impressive in the actuality than in the rather off-putting images—Stonehenge remodeled by Stalin—I have seen on TV. My son, who has a WWII computer game, displays an excellent knowledge of the battles, but is depressingly clueless about the names attached to the engraved quotations. Mrs. Straggler wants to be photographed sitting next to where CHINA is carved on a lower wall—fair enough, since, on A. J. P. Taylor's reckoning, it was China that suffered the first war deaths. I explain the word "bas-relief." My daughter is chattering to a friend via Mom's cell phone. "There's like fountains and stuff . . ."

Heading back to the Tidal Basin, we spot a colonnaded Doric temple off at one side in a grove of trees, and take a detour to investigate. The temple turns out to be the city memorial to those who served in World War I. It looks neglected—an orphan monument for an orphan war. "Your dad's war," comments my son; and yes, there on the stone at one side are carved the very words that appear on Dad's Victory Medal: THE GREAT WAR FOR CIVILIZATION. Nearly a hundred years now. I think of Dad and his medals, his trench stories, the knotty white shrapnel scars on his leg.

The kids like the FDR memorial much better. There is more to see, things hidden around corners to draw them onward, waterfalls, bronze statues. We all like the big caped statue in the third section, with the dog alongside, though I am annoyed at not being able to remember the dog's name. (Fala—I have just looked it up.) And what was that controversy about whether the president's cigarette holder should be shown? It isn't, though the position of the fingers suggests a last-minute removal. Curse our damn pettifogging Puritans—let the man have a smoke, for heaven's sake. Nellie turns off the cellphone for long enough to have a photograph taken with Mrs. Roosevelt, her namesake.

Lunch from my backpack at the Jefferson Memorial. We walk around the interior, reading all the carved quotations. The kids listen obediently, but are historied out. Danny has been peering across the water, scrutinizing the waiting line for the pedal boats. He thinks it is much shorter than before. "Can we please? Can we please?" Of course we can. We hike back round to the dock, pausing for ice cream on the way.

Half an hour later, lying back in the pedal boat under the bright sky, cherry blossoms all around me, listening contentedly to the kids' bickering—"You're supposed to be *pedaling*, but you're just *pretending*"—I let my fancy drift off into the future, to wonder when the next wars will come, whether such ringing words will be said again, from whence new Jeffersons and Roosevelts will come up to inspire us, what parts my children and their children will play. "A perfect day," murmurs my wife. Yes, yes, no more dark thoughts. A perfect day in Our Nation's Capital. **NR**

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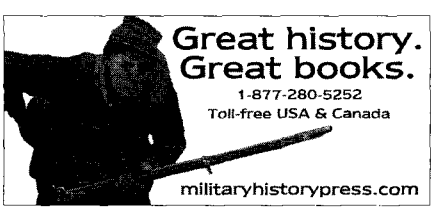

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Can We Stop Illegals?

NEW YORK, APRIL 8

THE parallels are remarkable, Berlin-Mexico. They are nevertheless worth reciting in order to refamiliarize ourselves with what nations and human beings tend to do when pressed beyond what they believe is their capacity to absorb.

In the late 1950s, the awful consequences of life under East German/Soviet rule caused people to vote with their feet—to move from East Germany into West Germany. The movement, in the early stages of it, was thought tolerable. But by the end of the decade it had become intolerable. West Germany had difficulties in assimilating East Germans in the numbers in which they arrived.

The problem, by the winter of 1960, had become insupportable. East German leader Walter Ulbricht reported to the Kremlin that at the rate doctors and engineers were leaving East Germany, in ten years if you needed a doctor you'd find none such left, let alone an engineer to build a bridge. We are going to close down Berlin, Ulbricht told Khrushchev, and the mighty Soviet army has to stand by us or the whole Soviet East European establishment is going to break down.

What happened was the Berlin Wall. If the border between Mexico and the U.S. were designed like the border between East and West Berlin, an effort could feasibly be made to block the apex into which the human traffic consolidated.

The idea of a 2,000-mile wall is not abandoned, because no escape from the current intolerable situation is officially abandoned. How long would it take? If we hired Israeli wall makers to go to work, or show us how to do it? Ex-Soviet wall builders could surely be found who are as young as 65 years old, and they certainly are looking for work.

The concept of a wall is disagreeable, but critical questions are now crystallizing. Can the U.S. govern its own borders? That is a very serious question because the answer to it is thought obvious: Yes—all nations control their own borders! But the question properly put becomes: Are we prepared to go to the lengths necessary to control our borders? To say yes is glibness—and glibness of a kind we are not practiced in, because maintaining the integrity of a wall requires anti-human fortifications. The Berliners began with barbed wire, which grew to high cement walls. In due course electricity was added, and finally dogs. You can't of course do that over a stretch of 2,000 miles. But would we be willing to do that for any distance?

What we have got is ad hoc minutemen volunteering for duty along the Arizona border. But these are "vigilantes," in the thanks-but-no-thanks language of President Bush. They are not trained in the enforcement of justice or in the use of appropriate weapons. What they do is inject a little fright into the situation, with, almost certainly, here and there a dead Mexican, and possibly an international crisis.

The cure to East-to-West migration in Germany was simple: the granting of liberty to the East. But effective liberty required huge capital expenditures. When the wall came down, the West Germans faced the need for an investment in the East to make it a place Germans would consider living in. The cost was hundreds of billions of dollars.

The flow of Mexicans to the north can be strategically contained either by improving the quality of Mexican economic life, or by suppressing opportunities in U.S. life. The former cannot be done, given cultural rigidities and impermeabilities. The latter can be attempted, but at great cost to U.S. business interests and ideals. Congress could pass a law imposing huge fines on any American enterprise that hires illegals. Collateral pressures could be applied, involving driving licenses, hospitals, schools. Are we willing to adopt such measures?

There is a yearning across the land to demonstrate that we are master of our own house. As things are going, we are not. The immigration wave appears uncontainable, and we cannot generate the sentiment required to do the kind of thing the East Germans did. All of which argues that effective reduction in illegal immigration is not going to happen.

Pity Rhode Island

NEW YORK, APRIL 12

WHAT is a sophisticated position on the United Nations? As the old saw goes, I'm glad you asked that question. I say that having served in the U.N. as a Public Member of the U.S. delegation, and written a book on the U.N. One feels the special pangs of John Bolton right now, up for ambassador to the U.N. Poor John, he was once derisory at the U.N.'s expense, using amusing language to bounce off the bureaucratic density of the organization. His barb was that if you lopped off the top ten stories of that building, nothing much would be missed. But—no jokes in church.

And church is what the U.N. is, in solemn quarters. There is even an organization called Citizens for Global Solutions. It has spent $20,000 on ads in Rhode Island urging the citizens of that monolithic state (10 percent GOP) to send disciplinary messages to Sen. Lincoln Chafee, whose vote on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is critical to the success of Mr. Bolton's candidacy. Without Chafee, the committee is tied, and Bolton can't therefore get preemptive consideration in the Senate, where he would be passed.

What we are seeing is a tug of war involving not President Bush's authority to send his own man to the U.N., but rather the reelection, in 2006, of a senator in Rhode Island. Chafee is a Republican. If he feels bound to stay with the GOP, that's because, as he reminded everyone recently, he was named after Abraham Lincoln. So he has not changed party affiliation, but his voting record would fit nicely within the bounds of Democratic orthodoxy.

The president is looking for a strong man at the U.N., and here is the problem. The strength of the organization depends on the strength within it of the United States. To the extent that the U.N. goes its

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own way, you get such as the Commission on Human Rights, which includes such human-rights devotees as Sudan, Zimbabwe, China, Cuba, and Saudi Arabia. That kind of thing may appeal to the Citizens for Global Solutions, but it doesn't really do very much for the U.N., except to remind us how many stories of it the next hurricane could whisk away without hurting anybody.

The U.N.'s duties fall roughly under two dispensations. The first has to do with clerical concerns. How do you divide up the air waves? What are the obligations of nation states to other nation states? The second category has to do with policy. Here the powerful nations have to exercise the dominant voice. It is in anticipation of this that the Security Council was devised, giving permanent positions to the five major world powers. For 45 years there were two contending powers, not five—the United States and the Soviet Union. Now there is a single power—the superpower. On critical matters, it has to prevail. To the extent it does not do so, the U.N. becomes marginal.

Bright people know this, and it was because of this that the choice of John Bolton, coming in from under secretary of state for arms control and international security, was so welcome. He told the Foreign Relations Committee that he recognizes that ambassador to the U.N. is not an independent policy-making role. Bolton is perfectly prepared to play the role of surrogate for President Bush. He gave the committee no reason to doubt that he would proceed as a civil servant, operating at the pleasure of the president, who, as Senator Chafee reluctantly acknowledged, was voted into that office athwart the will of the majority of people who live in Rhode Island.

That said, Mr. Bolton is in the tradition of singular people who, while serving their presidents faithfully, nevertheless leave their personal stamp on their ambassadorships. Jeane Kirkpatrick was a mountainous moral presence in the U.N., while Daniel Patrick Moynihan reminded us that Socrates still lives, even if he couldn't predictably win a Senate seat in Rhode Island. It would be a sign of great democratic health if one or two Democrats on the committee were to vote to confirm Bolton, but meanwhile, all rests on Lincoln Chafee, who was named after Abraham Lincoln.

Confusion and Gays

NEW YORK, APRIL 15

ROBERT Novak, the columnist and primary exegete of U.S. political thought, began a recent column as follows:

> Sen. Trent Lott looked like a supporter of Rudy Giuliani's presidential ambition when the former New York mayor visited Lott's home state of Mississippi recently. But in private, he warned Giuliani about roadblocks in his presidential path.
>
> Lott, who likes and admires Giuliani, told him that the New Yorker's support for abortion, homosexual rights, and gay marriage are heavy burdens for a Republican to carry nationally. Giuliani protested that he never supported same-sex marriage, only civil unions. Lott advised that in Mississippi, they don't see any difference between gay marriage and civil unions.

That difference may not amount to anything at all in Mississippi, but it means a great deal in other parts of America, Connecticut serving as laboratory of the week.

Begin by reminding ourselves that Connecticut is one of the left-leaningest states in the Union. A decade ago the legislators got so apprehensive about any possibility that *Roe* v. *Wade* might be repealed or modified that they went so far as to pass what one might call preemptive legislation. The act said that if *Roe* were repealed or modified, Connecticut would automatically pull from its shelves the freshly enacted contingency law which gave full sanction to abortion. In the spirit of covering all bases, Connecticut might pass a law saying that in the event the 13th Amendment is repealed, it will nevertheless continue to prohibit slavery.

What caught the eye last week was a bill in Hartford to okay civil unions between gays, temporized by an amendment to that bill which ordained that "marriages" would continue to be understood as unions between a man and a woman. This is a difference that apparently isn't noticed in Mississippi.

It was noticed by the legislators in Hartford, and conflicting understandings of its significance were advanced. The primary bloc supporting the legislative amendment to the effect that a civil union is not a marriage was motivated by apprehension that orthodox Connecticut voters might be vexed at the suggestion that gay unions would vitiate the heterosexual composition of marriages.

But those who had pressured for gay unions weren't all of them enthusiastic about the amendment. Their position is that to affirm the difference between the two has the sylleptic effect of depreciating civil union, by reminding you that it is not to be confused with marriage.

The quarrel continued in another quarter. The Episcopal bishop of Connecticut has himself authorized gay marriage and has supported the ordination of the gay bishop in New Hampshire. Six Episcopal pastors refused to follow their bishop's instruction, and he has retaliated by threatening to remove their church keys. The question of the elasticity of orthodoxy will be referred to a global meeting of Anglican leaders, but it isn't certain what is that council's authority, or by exactly what doctrines it should be guided.

Meanwhile, in Oregon, a court order rescinded 3,000 same-sex marriages effected in one county, which had flouted a statewide law. The court ruled that the county did not have the legal authority to act independently, so that the quarrel became one of jurisdiction, not of political consensus, let alone doctrinal authority.

We have at work an extraordinary exercise in democratic adjustment. How to acknowledge gay rights while still honoring what many think of as the structural meaning of marriage? And that quarrel abuts upon religious faith. In the hubbub, there needs to be protection for those who are guided by their faith, the desolate communion that needs exegetes wise enough to explain to them what exactly the Connecticut legislature is trying to say.

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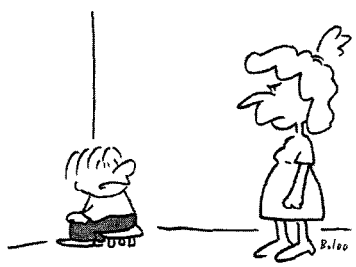

"Gee, Mom—forever is a long time!"

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

The Uses of Multiculturalism

I ALWAYS like those 'tween-wars novels set in Europe with a lot of dodgy characters of many nationalities all rubbing up against each other: Romanians, Frenchmen, Hungarians, Germans, Poles—and, of course, Jews. Sometimes they're hurtling across international frontiers—Graham Greene's *Stamboul Train*—so you'd expect the dramatis personae to be of many lands. But pick up an early Maigret and even in a parochial police procedural you'll find mysterious Turks and Greeks turning up.

Don't read novels? Rent a movie. Look at how many Hollywood A-list stars of the Golden Age were foreigners: Claudette Colbert, Maurice Chevalier, Marlene Dietrich, Paul Henreid, Greta Garbo, Bela Lugosi, Hedy Lamarr, Ingrid Bergman . . . And so many of the second rank, the great characters who make the silliest formulaic filler of the day so watchable: Conrad Veidt, S. Z. Sakall, Peter Lorre, Akim Tamiroff . . . And I haven't even mentioned the Brits—Ronald Colman, David Niven, Cary Grant, Sir C. Aubrey Smith, etc.

Where are the Hollywood foreigners today? Oh sure, there's still a couple of imports from the British Empire here and there: Nicole Kidman, Charlize Theron. But every time they land a big movie role the first thing they have to do is submerge their accents. They're never allowed to be as deliciously foreign as Peter Lorre in *The Maltese Falcon*. Alan Jay Lerner, who wrote the script and lyrics for *Gigi*, once told me about the first run-through of "Thank Heaven For Little Girls." At the end, a worried Maurice Chevalier turned to Lerner for reassurance: "How was I?"

"Perfect," said Alan, looking at it from the songwriter's point of view. "I could understand every word."

"No, no," said Chevalier. "Did I sound French enough?"

No one ever worries about whether Charlize Theron sounds South African enough. She and Russell Crowe and Cate Blanchett are the high octoroons of the movie scene, passing for Boston Brahmins or southern trailer trash as required. And don't say, well, what about all the Hispanics? That's a domestic constituency now, and growing so fast that poor old Cate and Charlize and Nicole will be talking like Carmen Miranda by the time they're 50.

Another small example: There used to be an entire category of songs written in "franglais"—"Darling, je vous aime beaucoup / Je ne sais pas what to do," etc. A lot of foreign songs were convincingly anglicized but many more retained their Continental character and still became monster hits: "La Vie En Rose," "C'est Si Bon," "Volare," "Granada" . . . Their foreignness was their appeal.

Claudette Colbert (with Ben Lyon)

All gone now. The allegedly bland white-bread picket-fence Ozzie-and-Harriet 1950s were a non-stop fiesta of diversity compared with the dreary parochialism of American entertainment today. After 30 years of immersion in the virtues of multiculturalism, U.S. popular culture has never been more unicultural. If MGM remade *Grand Hotel*, they'd set it in Cleveland.

In other words, if "multiculturalism" is intended to impart any facts about other cultures—the capital city of Malaysia; the principal exports of South Africa, apart from Charlize Theron—or even a vague interest in other cultures, then clearly it's a spectacular failure. So obviously that can't have been the objective.

To the academy, it was a way of intellectually dignifying what would otherwise be regarded as their psychologically unhealthy cultural self-loathing, and in that sense it's been spectacularly successful (Ward Churchill et al.). To the political Left, it was embraced as a philosophical escape-hatch from the election results: If all your ideas are unpopular with the majority of people within your jurisdiction, then it makes sense to argue that they're so universal they need to be introduced transnationally—hence the chatter about U.N.-imposed anti-smoking bans, U.N.-imposed gun control, and no doubt U.N. taxes sooner or later. Few of us would willingly be ruled by an unaccountable, unremovable, unrepresentative club of elite bossy-boots, but multiculturalism gives the racket an appealing fig leaf: One reason it polls better than it should is that if you say "U.N." to folks they don't think of Kofi Annan and the Sudanese member of the Human Rights Commission but Audrey Hepburn at a UNESCO gala surrounded by children of many lands—a multicultural rather than a geopolitical image.

But saddest of all are those who drank so much of the multiculti Perrier they began to believe it. For three decades, most Westerners trumpeted as a virtue what was, in fact, a profound weakness. In bragging about the numbers of Sikhs and Muslims, Africans and Arabs adding hitherto unprecedented vibrancy to the restaurant scene in Malmö and Winnipeg, Western governments made multiculturalism an indispensable part of their sense of their own goodness. In reality, Canada and western Europe needed immigrants because of their own terrible combination of unsustainable welfare systems and deathbed demographics. As China and India follow South Korea and Taiwan, and Iraq and Ukraine follow China and India, immigrants will stop coming. One day soon, Europeans may well become the emigrants, deciding there are better opportunities in India and Taiwan: The present trickle out of Holland could become a continent-wide version of American cities' "white flight."

Multiculturalism is a meaningless pose for Hollywood, a lucrative fraud for the American academy, a sleight of hand for the political Left. But for much of the advanced world it's a suicide cult. It would make a great movie—if only there were any bankable foreigners to put in it. **NR**

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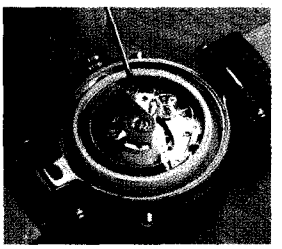

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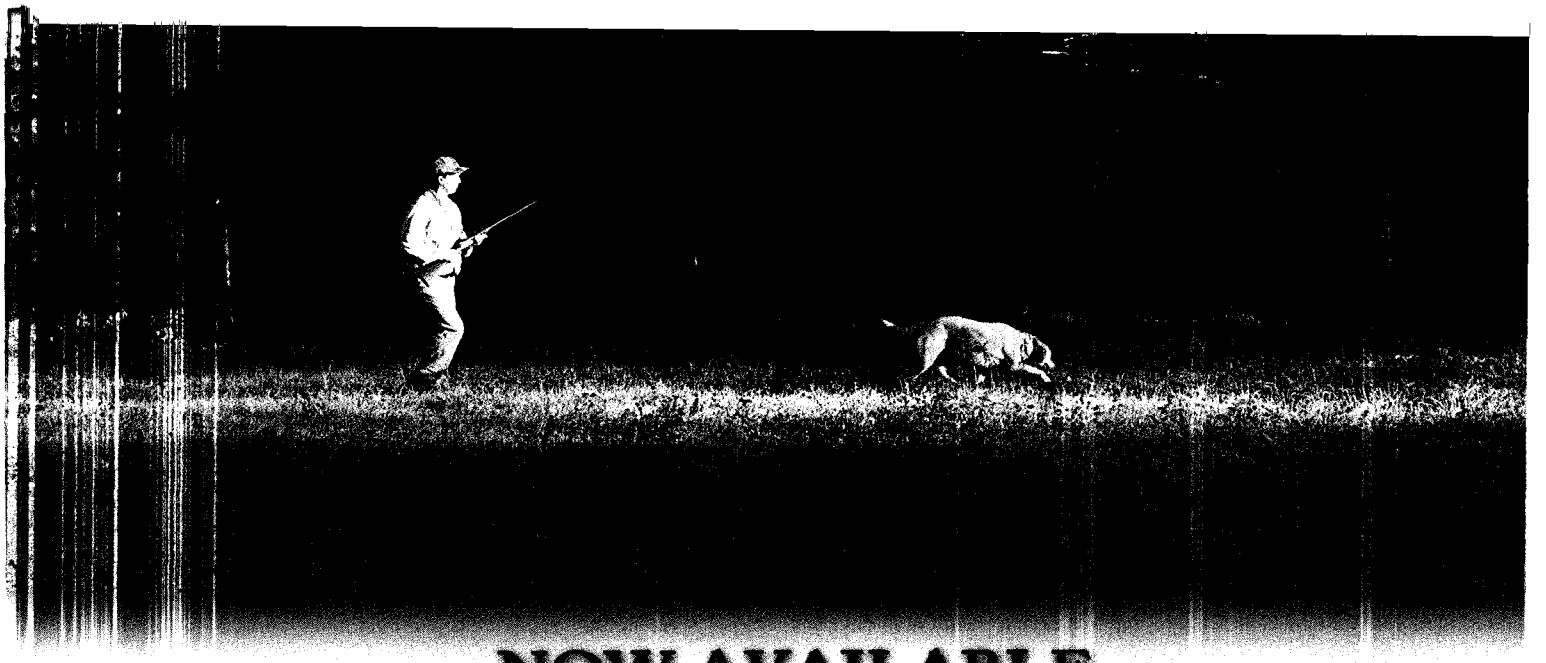

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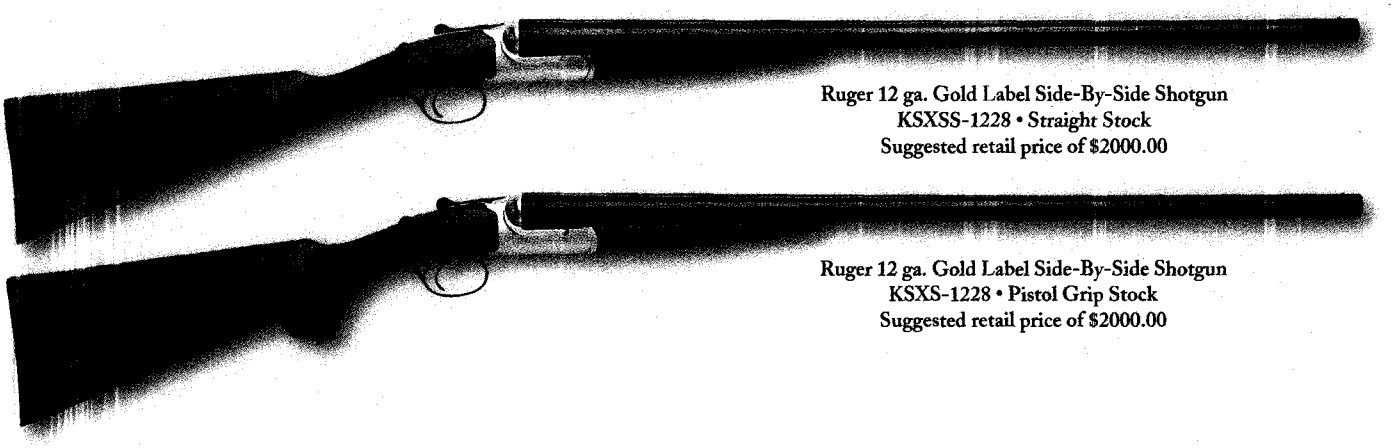
THE RUGER GOLD LABEL® SHOTGUN



Ruger 12 ga. Gold Label Side-By-Side Shotgun
KSXSS-1228 • Straight Stock
Suggested retail price of $2000.00

Ruger 12 ga. Gold Label Side-By-Side Shotgun
KSXS-1228 • Pistol Grip Stock
Suggested retail price of $2000.00

Now, there is a modern, American-made side-by-side that rivals the finest and most expensive European and British handcrafted double shotguns. In the Ruger Gold Label, modern manufacturing techniques and materials combine precision and durability with aesthetic and dynamic harmony, once achieved only through months of skilled hand labor. The result is a unique rounded action premium quality shotgun with the performance and reliability you expect from Ruger.

At only 6 1/2 pounds, the Gold Label balances gracefully, with the lively responsiveness demanded by the upland game hunter. Lightweight, hammer-forged, rust blued barrels, relieved forcing cones, and thin steel-shot-compatible screw-in choke tubes ensure uniform patterns and superb handling dynamics. The round, finely polished, brushed stainless steel receiver has clean lines with no exposed pins or screws. Dickson-style selective ejectors kick out empties with authority. Underlugs feature jeweled surfaces, and a matte steel rib and gold bead sight draw the eye naturally to game or clays as surely as the graceful stock and splinter forend guide the hands toward the target.

The Gold Label is a work of art, to be cherished during your lifetime, then passed on to another who exults in the joy of being afield on a crisp fall day.

STURM, RUGER & CO., INC.
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